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THE WORKS OF

CHARLES AND MARY LAMB

THE WORKS OF CHARLES AND MARY LAMB

EDITED BY E. V. LUCAS

I. MISCELLANEOUS PROSE 1798-1834
II. ELIA AND THE LAST ESSAYS OF ELIA
III. BOOKS FOR CHILDREN
IV. DRAMATIC SPECIMENS AND THE GARRICK PLAYS
V. POEMS AND PLAYS
VI. LETTERS 1796-1820
VII. LETTERS 1821-1834

THE LIFE OF CHARLES LAMB. By E. V. LUCAS
TWO VOLUMES. DEMY 8vo.

[*In Preparation*

Charles Lamb

from the drawing by Thomas Hageman in 1822 or 1823

THE WORLD

BY

L. V. [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

1821

[illegible]

Charles Lamb

THE WORKS OF
CHARLES AND MARY LAMB

EDITED BY

E. V. LUCAS

VOLUME VII.

LETTERS

1821-1834

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THE
LETTERS OF CHARLES AND MARY LAMB
1821—1834

LETTER 252

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. WILLIAM AYRTON

[Dated at end: Jan. 23, 1821.]

DEAR Mrs. Ayrton, my sister desires me, as being a more expert penman than herself, to say that she saw Mrs. Paris yesterday, and that she is very much out of spirits, and has expressed a great wish to see your son William, and Fanny——

I like to write that word *Fanny*. I do not know but it was one reason of taking upon me this pleasing task——

Moreover that if the said William and Frances will go and sit an hour with her at any time, she will engage that no one else shall see them but herself, and the servant who opens the door, she being confined to her private room. I trust you and the Juveniles will comply with this reasonable request.

& am
Dear Mrs. Ayrton
your's and yours'
Truly
C. LAMB.

Cov. Gar.
23 Jan. 1821.

NOTE

[Mrs. Ayrton (*née* Arnold) was the wife of William Ayrton, the musical critic (see Letter 223).]

LETTER 253

CHARLES LAMB TO MISS HUMPHREYS

London 27 Jany. 1821.

DEAR Madam, Carriages to Cambridge are in such request, owing to the Installation, that we have found it impossible to procure a conveyance for Emma before Wednesday, on which

day between the hours of 3 and 4 in the afternoon you will see your little friend, with her bloom somewhat impaired by late hours and dissipation, but her gait, gesture, and general manners (I flatter myself) considerably improved by —— *somebody that shall be nameless.* My sister joins me in love to all true Trumpingtonians, not specifying any, to avoid *envy ;* and begs me to assure you that Emma has been a very good girl, which, with certain limitations, I must myself subscribe to. I wish I could cure her of making dog's ears in books, and pinching them on poor Pompey, who, for one, I dare say, will heartily rejoyce at her departure.

Dear Madam,

Yours truly

foolish C. L.

NOTE

[The letter is addressed to "Miss Humphreys, with Mrs. Paris, Trumpington Street, Cambridge." Franked by J. Rickman.

This letter contains the first reference in the correspondence to Emma Isola, daughter of Charles Isola, Esquire Bedell of Cambridge University, and granddaughter of Agostino Isola, the Italian critic and teacher, of Cambridge, among whose pupils had been Wordsworth. Miss Humphreys was Emma Isola's aunt. Emma seems to have been brought to London by Mrs. Paris and left with the Lambs.

Pompey seems to have been the Lambs' first dog. Later, as we shall see, they adopted Dash.]

LETTER 254

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. WILLIAM AYRTON

[*See facsimile on opposite page*]

[Dated at end: March 15, 1821.]

DEAR Madam, We are out of town of necessity till Wednesday next, when we hope to see one of you at least to a rubber. On some future Saturday we shall most gladly accept your kind offer. When I read your delicate little note, I am ashamed of my great staring letters.

Yours most truly

CHARLES LAMB.

Dalston near Hackney
15 Mar. 1821.

Dear Madam. We are out of town of necessity till Wednesday next when we hope to see one of you at least to a rubber. On some future Saturday we shall most gladly accept your kind offer. When I read your delicate little note, I am ashamed of my great staring letters.

Yours most truly

Charles Lamb

Dalston near Hackney
15 mar 1821

addressed to me
M.A. (Marianne Ayrton)

FACSIMILE OF A NOTE FROM LAMB TO MRS. WILLIAM AYRTON

FROM THE ORIGINAL LENT BY THE LATE W. S. AYRTON

LETTER 255

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

30 March, 1821.

MY dear Sir—If you can come next Sunday we shall be equally glad to see you, but do not trust to any of Martin's appointments, except on business, in future. He is notoriously faithless in that point, and we did wrong not to have warned you. Leg of Lamb, as before; hot at 4. And the heart of Lamb ever.

Yours truly, C. L.

LETTER 256

CHARLES LAMB TO LEIGH HUNT

Indifferent Wednesday [April 18], 1821.

DEAR Hunt,—There was a sort of side talk at Mr. Novello's about our spending *Good Friday* at Hampstead, but my sister has got so bad a cold, and we both want rest so much, that you shall excuse our putting off the visit some little time longer. Perhaps, after all, you know nothing of it.—Believe me, yours truly,

C. LAMB.

LETTER 257

CHARLES LAMB TO S. T. COLERIDGE

May 1st [1821],
Mr. Gilman's, Highgate.

MR C.—I will not fail you on Friday by six, and Mary, perhaps, earlier. I very much wish to meet "Master Mathew," and am much obliged to the G——s for the opportunity. Our kind respects to them always.— ELIA.

Extract from a MS. note of S. T. C. in my Beaumont and Fletcher, dated April 17th 1807.

Midnight.

"God bless you, dear Charles Lamb, I am dying; I feel I have not many weeks left."

NOTE

[Master Mathew is in Ben Jonson's "Every Man in His Humour." Lamb's "Beaumont and Fletcher," is in the British Museum. The note quoted by Lamb is not there, or perhaps it is one that has been crossed out. This still remains: "N.B. I shall not be long here, Charles! I gone, you will not mind my having spoiled a book in order to leave a Relic. S. T. C., Oct. 1811."

LETTER 258

CHARLES LAMB TO JAMES GILLMAN

[Dated at end: 2 May, 1821.]

DEAR Sir—You dine so late on Friday, it will be impossible for us to go home by the eight o'clock stage. Will you oblige us by securing us beds at some house from which a stage goes to the Bank in the morning? I would write to Coleridge, but cannot think of troubling a dying man with such a request.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

If the beds in the town are all engaged, in consequence of Mr. Mathews's appearance, a hackney-coach will serve.

Wednesy. 2 May '21.

We shall neither of us come much before the time.

NOTE

[Mrs. Mathews (who was half-sister of Fanny Kelly) described this evening in her *Memoirs* of her husband, 1839. Her account of Lamb is interesting:—

Mr. Lamb's first approach was not prepossessing. His figure was small and mean; and no man certainly was ever less beholden to his tailor. His "bran" new *suit* of black cloth (in which he affected several times during the day to take great pride, and to cherish as a novelty that he had long looked for and wanted) was drolly contrasted with his very rusty silk stockings, shown from his knees, and his much too large *thick* shoes, without polish. His shirt rejoiced in a wide ill-plaited frill, and his very small, tight, white neckcloth was hemmed to a fine point at the ends that formed part of the little bow. His hair was black and sleek, but not formal, and his face the gravest I ever saw, but indicating great intellect, and resembling very much the portraits of King Charles I. Mr. Coleridge was very anxious about his *pet* Lamb's first impression upon my husband, which I believe his friend saw; and guessing that he had been extolled, he mischievously resolved to thwart his panegyrist, disappoint the strangers, and altogether to upset the suspected plan of showing him off.

The Mathews' were then living at Ivy Cottage, only a short distance from the Grove, Highgate, where the famous Mathews collection of pictures was to be seen of which Lamb subsequently wrote in the *London Magazine*.]

LETTER 259

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN PAYNE COLLIER

May 16, 1821.

DEAR J. P. C.,—Many thanks for the "Decameron:" I have not such a gentleman's book in my collection: it was a great treat to me, and I got it just as I was wanting something of the sort. I take less pleasure in books than heretofore, but I like books about books. In the second volume, in particular, are treasures—your discoveries about "Twelfth Night," etc. What a Shakespearian essence that speech of Osrades for food!—Shakespeare is coarse to it—beginning "Forbear and eat no more." Osrades warms up to that, but does not set out ruffian-swaggerer. The character of the Ass with those three lines, worthy to be set in gilt vellum, and worn in frontlets by the noble beasts for ever—

> "Thou would, perhaps, he should become thy foe,
> And to that end dost beat him many times:
> He cares not for himself, much less thy blow."

Cervantes, Sterne, and Coleridge, have said positively nothing for asses compared with this.

I write in haste; but p. 24, vol. i., the line you cannot appropriate is Gray's sonnet, specimenifyed by Wordsworth in first preface to L. B., as mixed of bad and good style: p. 143, 2nd vol., you will find last poem but one of the collection on Sidney's death in Spenser, the line,

> "Scipio, Cæsar, Petrarch of our time."

This fixes it to be Raleigh's: I had guess'd it to be Daniel's. The last after it, "Silence augmenteth rage," I will be crucified if it be not Lord Brooke's. Hang you, and all meddling researchers, hereafter, that by raking into learned dust may find me out wrong in my conjecture!

Dear J. P. C., I shall take the first opportunity of personally thanking you for my entertainment. We are at Dalston for the

most part, but I fully hope for an evening soon with you in Russell or Bouverie Street, to talk over old times and books. Remember *us* kindly to Mrs. J. P. C.

Yours very kindly, CHARLES LAMB.

I write in misery.

N.B.—The best pen I could borrow at our butcher's: the ink, I verily believe, came out of the kennel.

NOTE

[Collier's *Poetical Decameron*, in two volumes, was published in 1820: a series of imaginary conversations on curious and little-known books. His "Twelfth Night" discoveries will be found in the Eighth Conversation; Collier deduces the play from Barnaby Rich's *Farewell to Military Profession*, 1606. He also describes Thomas Lodge's "Rosalynde," the forerunner of "As You Like It," in which is the character Rosader, whom Lamb calls Osrades. His speech for food runs thus:—

It hapned that day that *Gerismond*, the lawfull king of *France* banished by *Torismond*, who with a lustie crew of outlawes liued in that Forrest, that day in honour of his birth, made a feast to all his bolde yeomen, and frolickt it with store of wine and venison, sitting all at a long table vnder the shadow of Limon trees: to that place by chance fortune conducted *Rosader*, who seeing such a crew of braue men, hauing store of that for want of which hee and Adam perished, hee stept boldly to the boords end, and saluted the Company thus.—Whatsoeuer thou be that art maister of these lustie squires, I salute thee as graciously as a man in extreame distresse may: knowe that I and a fellow friend of mine, are here famished in the forrest for want of foode: perish we must, vnlesse relieued by thy fauours. Therefore if thou be a Gentleman, giue meate to men, and such as are euery way worthie of life: let the proudest Squire that sits at thy table rise and encounter with me in any honourable point of activitie whatsoeuer, and if he and thou proue me not a man, send mee away comfortlesse: if thou refuse this, as a niggard of thy cates, I will haue amongst you with my sword, for rather wil I die valiantly, then perish with so cowardly an extreame (Collier's *Poetical Decameron*, 174, Eighth Conversation).

Lamb compares with that the passage in "As You Like It," II., 7, 88, beginning with Orlando's "Forbear, and eat no more."

The character of the ass is quoted by Collier from an old book, *The Noblenesse of the Asse*, 1595, in the Third Conversation:—

Thou wouldst (perhaps) he should become thy foe,
And to that end doost beat him many times;
He cares not for himselfe, much lesse thy blowe.

Lamb wrote more fully of this passage in an article on the ass contributed to Hone's *Every-Day Book* in 1825 (see Vol. I. of the present edition, page 303).

The line from Gray's sonnet on the death of Mr. Richard West was this:—

And weep the more because I weep in vain.

"Scipio, Cæsar," etc. This line runs, in the epitaph on Sidney, beginning "To praise thy life"—

Scipio, Cicero, and Petrarch of our time!

It is generally supposed to be by Raleigh. The next poem, "Silence Augmenteth Grief," is attributed by Malone to Sir Edward Dyer, and by Hannah to Raleigh.]

LETTER 260

CHARLES LAMB TO B. W. PROCTER

[No date. ? Summer, 1821.]

DEAR Sir, The *Wits* (as Clare calls us) assemble at my Cell (20 Russell St. Cov.-Gar.) this evening at ¼ before 7. Cold meat at 9. Puns at — a little after. Mr. Cary wants to see you, to scold you. I hope you will not fail.

Yours &c. &c. &c.

C. LAMB.

Thursday.

I am sorry the London Magazine is going to be given up.

NOTE

[I assume the date of this note to be summer, 1821, because it was then that Baldwin, Cradock & Joy, the *London Magazine's* first publishers, gave it up. The reason was the death of John Scott, the editor, and probably to a large extent the originator, of the magazine. It was sold to Taylor & Hessey, their first number being dated July, 1821.

Scott had become involved in a quarrel with *Blackwood*, which reached such a pitch that a duel was fought, between Scott and Christie, a friend of Lockhart's. The whole story, which is involved, and indeed not wholly clear, need not be told here: it will be found in Mr. Lang's memoir of Lockhart. The meeting was held at Chalk Farm on February 16, 1821. Peter George Patmore, sub-editor of the *London*, was Scott's second. Scott fell, wounded by a shot which Christie fired purely in self-defence. He died on February 27.

Mr. Cary. Henry Francis Cary the translator of Dante and a contributor to the *London Magazine*.

The *London Magazine* had four periods. From 1820 to the middle of 1821, when it was Baldwin, Cradock & Joy's. From 1821 to the end of 1824, when it was Taylor & Hessey's at a shilling. From January, 1825, to August of that year, when it was Taylor & Hessey's at half-a-crown; and from September, 1825, to the end, when it was Henry Southern's, and was published by Hunt & Clarke.]

LETTER 261

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN TAYLOR

Margate, June 8, 1821.

DEAR Sir,—I am extremely sorry to be obliged to decline the article proposed, as I should have been flattered with a Plate accompanying it. In the first place, Midsummer day is not a topic I could make anything of—I am so pure a Cockney, and little read, besides, in May games and antiquities; and, in the second, I am here at Margate, spoiling my holydays with a Review I have undertaken for a friend, which I shall barely get through before my return; for that sort of work is a hard task to me. If you will excuse the shortness of my first contribution—and I *know* I can promise nothing more for July—I will endeavour a longer article for *our next*. Will you permit me to say that I think Leigh Hunt would do the article you propose in a masterly manner, if he has not outwrit himself already upon the subject. I do not return the proof—to save postage—because it is correct, with ONE EXCEPTION. In the stanza from Wordsworth, you have changed DAY into AIR for rhyme-sake: DAY is the right reading, and I IMPLORE you to restore it.

The other passage, which you have queried, is to my ear correct. Pray let it stand.

Dr Sr, yours truly, C. LAMB.

On second consideration, I do enclose the proof.

NOTE

[John Taylor (1781-1864), the publisher, with Hessey, of the *London Magazine* was, in 1813, the first publicly to identify Sir Philip Francis with Junius. Taylor acted as editor of the *London*

Magazine from 1821 to 1824, assisted by Thomas Hood. Later his interests were centred in currency questions.

"I am here at Margate." I do not know what review Lamb was writing. If written and published it has not been reprinted. It was on this visit to Margate that Lamb met Charles Cowden Clarke.

"My first contribution." The first number to bear Taylor & Hessey's name was dated July, but they had presumably acquired the rights in the magazine before then. Lamb's first contribution to the *London Magazine* had been in August, 1820, "The South-Sea House."

The proof which Lamb returned was that of the *Elia* essay on "Mackery End in Hertfordshire," printed in the July number of the *London Magazine*, in which he quoted a stanza from Wordsworth's "Yarrow Visited":—

> But thou, that didst appear so fair
> To fond imagination,
> Dost rival in the light of day
> Her delicate creation.

Here should come a scrap from Lamb to Ayrton, dated July 17, 1821, referring to the Coronation. Lamb says that in consequence of this event he is postponing his Wednesday evening to Friday.]

LETTER 262

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN TAYLOR

July 21, 1821.

DR Sir,—The *Lond. Mag.* is chiefly pleasant to me, because some of my friends write in it. I hope Hazlitt intends to go on with it, we cannot spare Table Talk. For myself I feel almost exhausted, but I will try my hand a little longer, and shall not at all events be written out of it by newspaper paragraphs. Your proofs do not seem to want my helping hand, they are quite correct always. For God's sake change *Sisera* to *Jael*. This last paper will be a choke-pear I fear to some people, but as you do not object to it, I can be under little apprehension of your exerting your Censorship too rigidly.

Thanking you for your extract from M^r. E.'s letter,

I remain, Dr Sir,

Your obliged,

C. LAMB.

NOTE

[Hazlitt continued his Table Talk in the *London Magazine* until December, 1821.

Lamb seems to have been treated foolishly by some newspaper critic; but I have not traced the paragraphs in question.

The proof was that of the *Elia* essay "Imperfect Sympathies," which was printed (with a fuller title) in the number for August, 1821. The reference to Jael is in the passage on Braham and the Jewish character.

I do not identify Mr. E. Possibly Elton.

Here should come a further letter to Taylor, dated July 30, 1821, not available for this edition, in which Lamb refers to some verses addressed to him by "Olen" (Charles Abraham Elton: see note to Letter 333) in the *London Magazine* for August, remonstrating with him for the pessimism of the *Elia* essay "New Year's Eve" (see Vol. II. of this edition, page 328).

Lamb also remarks that he borrowed the name Elia (pronounced Ellia) from an old South-Sea House clerk who is now dead.]

LETTER 263

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE

[Summer, 1821.]

MY dear Sir—Your letter has lain in a drawer of my desk, upbraiding me every time I open the said drawer, but it is almost impossible to answer such a letter in such a place, and I am out of the habit of replying to epistles otherwhere than at office. You express yourself concerning H. like a true friend, and have made me feel that I have somehow neglected him, but without knowing very well how to rectify it. I live so remote from him—by Hackney—that he is almost out of the pale of visitation at Hampstead. And I come but seldom to Cov^t^ Gard^n^ this summer time—and when I do, am sure to pay for the late hours and pleasant Novello suppers which I incur. I also am an invalid. But I will hit upon some way, that you shall not have cause for your reproof in future. But do not think I take the hint unkindly. When I shall be brought low by any sickness or untoward circumstance, write just such a letter to some tardy friend of mine—or come up yourself with your friendly Henshaw face—and that will be better. I shall not forget in haste our casual day at Margate. May we have many such there or elsewhere! God bless you for

your kindness to H., which I will remember. But do not show N. this, for the flouting infidel doth mock when Christians cry God bless us. Yours and *his, too*, and all our little circle's most affect^e^.

C. LAMB.

Mary's love included.

NOTE

[Charles Cowden Clarke (1787-1877) was the son of a schoolmaster who had served as usher with George Dyer at Northampton. Afterwards he established a school at Enfield, where Keats was one of the scholars. Charles Cowden Clarke, at this time a bookseller, remained one of Keats' friends and was a friend also of Leigh Hunt's, on whose behalf he seems to have written to Lamb. Later he became a partner of Alfred Novello, the musical publisher, son of Vincent Novello. In 1828 he married Mary Victoria Novello.

"Friendly Henshaw face." I cannot explain this.

Leigh Hunt left England for Italy in November, 1821, to join Shelley and Byron.]

LETTER 264

MARY LAMB TO MRS. WILLIAM AYRTON

[No date. ? 1821.]
Thursday Morning.

MY dear friend,

The kind interest you took in my perplexities of yesterday makes me feel that you will be well pleased to hear I got through my complicated business far better than I had ventured to hope I should do. In the first place let me thank you, my good friend, for your good advice; for, had I not gone to Martin first he would have sent a senseless letter to Mr. Rickman, and *now* he is coming here to-day in order to frame one in conjunction with my brother.

What will be Mr. Rickman's final determination I know not, but he and Mrs. Rickman both gave me a most kind reception, and a most patient hearing, and then Mr. R. walked with me as far as Bishopsgate Street, conversing the whole way on the same unhappy subject. I will see you again the very first opportunity till when farewel with grateful thanks.

How senseless I was not to make you go back in that empty coach. I never have but one idea in my poor head at a time.

Yours affectionately

M. LAMB.

at Mr. Coston's
No. 14 Kingsland Row Dalston.

NOTE

[The explanation of this letter is found in an entry in Crabb Robinson's *Diary*, the unpublished portion, which tells us that owing to certain irregularities Rickman, who was Clerk Assistant at the table of the House of Commons, had been obliged to discharge Martin Burney, who was one of his clerks.

Here should come another scrap from Lamb to Ayrton, dated August 14, stating that at to-morrow's rubber the windows will be closed on account of Her Majesty's death. Her Majesty was Queen Caroline, whom Lamb had championed. She died on August 7.

Here should come an unavailable letter from Lamb to Allsop, dated October 19, 1821. In it Lamb thanks Allsop for a hare, which had come as from Mr. Alfourd. Lamb decides to divide his gratitude between Allsop and Talfourd. Mary Lamb, he says, has been and is ill. They are at Dalston. The subscription is Piscatorum Amicus, C. L.]

LETTER 265

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM AYRTON

[Oct. 27, 1821.]

I COME, Grimalkin! Dalston, near Hackney, 27th Octr. One thousand 8 hundred and twenty one years and a wee-bit since you and I were redeemed. I doubt if *you* are done properly yet.

NOTE

[A further letter to Ayrton, dated from Dalston, October 30, is printed by Mr. Macdonald, in which Lamb speaks of his sister's illness and the death of his brother John, who died on October 26, aged fifty-eight. It is reasonable to suppose that Lamb, when the above note was written, was unaware of his brother's death (see note to Letter 267 on page 564). On October 26, however, he had written to the editor of the *London Magazine* saying that he was most uncomfortably situated at home and expecting some trouble which might prevent further writing for some time—which may have been an allusion to his brother's illness or to signs of Mary Lamb's approaching malady.

Here should come a note to William Hone, printed by Mr. Macdonald, evidently in reply to a comment on Lamb's essay on "Saying Grace." Also a letter to Rickman. See Appendix II., page 974.]

LETTER 266

CHARLES LAMB TO S. T. COLERIDGE

March 9th, 1822.

DEAR C.,—It gives me great satisfaction to hear that the pig turned out so well—they are interesting creatures at a certain age—what a pity such buds should blow out into the maturity of rank bacon! You had all some of the crackling—and brain sauce—did you remember to rub it with butter, and gently dredge it a little, just before the crisis? Did the eyes come away kindly with no Œdipean avulsion? Was the crackling the colour of the ripe pomegranate? Had you no complement of boiled neck of mutton before it, to blunt the edge of delicate desire? Did you flesh maiden teeth in it? Not that I sent the pig, or can form the remotest guess what part Owen could play in the business. I never knew him give anything away in my life. He would not begin with strangers. I suspect the pig, after all, was meant for me; but at the unlucky juncture of time being absent, the present somehow went round to Highgate. To confess an honest truth, a pig is one of those things I could never think of sending away. Teals, wigeons, snipes, barn-door fowl, ducks, geese—your tame villatic things—Welsh mutton, collars of brawn, sturgeon, fresh or pickled, your potted char, Swiss cheeses, French pies, early grapes, muscadines, I impart as freely unto my friends as to myself. They are but self-extended; but pardon me if I stop somewhere—where the fine feeling of benevolence giveth a higher smack than the sensual rarity—there my friends (or any good man) may command me; but pigs are pigs, and I myself therein am nearest to myself. Nay, I should think it an affront, an undervaluing done to Nature who bestowed such a boon upon me, if in a churlish mood I parted with the precious gift. One of the bitterest pangs of remorse I ever felt was when a child—when my kind old aunt had strained her pocket-strings to bestow a sixpenny whole plum-cake upon me. In my way home through the Borough, I met a venerable old man, not a mendicant, but thereabouts—a look-beggar, not a verbal petitionist; and in the coxcombry of taught-charity I gave away the cake to him. I walked on a little in all the pride of an Evangelical peacock, when of a sudden my old aunt's kindness crossed me—the sum it was to her—the pleasure she had a right to expect that I—not the old impostor—should take in eating her cake—the cursed ingratitude by which, under the colour of a Christian virtue, I had frustrated

her cherished purpose. I sobbed, wept, and took it to heart so grievously, that I think I never suffered the like—and I was right. It was a piece of unfeeling hypocrisy, and proved a lesson to me ever after. The cake has long been masticated, consigned to dung-hill with the ashes of that unseasonable pauper.

But when Providence, who is better to us all than our aunts, gives me a pig, remembering my temptation and my fall, I shall endeavour to act towards it more in the spirit of the donor's purpose.

Yours (short of pig) to command in everything. C. L.

NOTE

[This letter probably led to the immediate composition of the *Elia* essay "A Dissertation on Roast Pig" (see Vol. II. of the present edition, page 120), which was printed in the *London Magazine* for September, 1822. See also "Thoughts on Presents of Game," Vol. I. of this edition, page 343.

"Œdipean avulsion." Œdipus, King of Thebes, in a passion of grief put out his eyes.

"Owen." Lamb's landlord in Russell Street.

"Tame villatic things"—*Samson Agonistes*, 1695, "tame villatic fowl." Villatic means belonging to a village. farm-house

"My kind old aunt . . . the Borough." This is rather perplexing. Lamb, to the best of our knowledge, never as a child lived anywhere but in the Temple. His only aunt of whom we know anything lived with the family also in the Temple. But John Lamb's will proves Lamb to have had two aunts. The reference to the Borough suggests therefore that the aunt in question was not Sarah Lamb (Aunt Hetty) but her sister.]

LETTER 267

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

20th March, 1822.

MY dear Wordsworth—A letter from you is very grateful, I have not seen a Kendal postmark so long! We are pretty well save colds and rheumatics, and a certain deadness to every thing, which I think I may date from poor John's Loss, and another accident or two at the same time, that has made me almost bury myself at Dalston, where yet I see more faces than I could wish. Deaths over-set one and put one out long after the recent grief.

Two or three have died within this last two twelvem^ths.^, and so many parts of me have been numbed. One sees a picture, reads an anecdote, starts a casual fancy, and thinks to tell of it to this person in preference to every other—the person is gone whom it would have peculiarly suited. It won't do for *another*. Every departure destroys a class of sympathies. There's Capt. Burney gone !—what fun has whist now? what matters it what you lead, if you can no longer fancy him looking over you? One never hears any thing, but the image of the particular person occurs with whom alone almost you would care to share the intelligence. Thus one distributes oneself about—and now for so many parts of me I have lost the market. Common natures do not suffice me. Good people, as they are called, won't serve. I want individuals. I am made up of queer points and I want so many answering needles. The going away of friends does not make the remainder more precious. It takes so much from them as there was a common link. A. B. and C. make a party. A. dies. B. not only loses A. but all A.'s part in C. C. loses A.'s part in B., and so the alphabet sickens by subtraction of interchangeables. I express myself muddily, capite dolente. I have a dulling cold. My theory is to enjoy life, but the practice is against it. I grow ominously tired of official confinement. Thirty years have I served the Philistines, and my neck is not subdued to the yoke. You don't know how wearisome it is to breathe the air of four pent walls without relief day after day, all the golden hours of the day between 10 and 4 without ease or interposition. Tædet me harum quotidianarum formarum, these pestilential clerk faces always in one's dish. O for a few years between the grave and the desk! they are the same, save that at the latter you are outside the machine. The foul enchanter—letters four do form his name—Busirane is his name in hell—that has curtailed you of some domestic comforts, hath laid a heavier hand on me, not in present infliction, but in taking away the hope of enfranchisement. I dare not whisper to myself a Pension on this side of absolute incapacitation and infirmity, till years have sucked me dry. Otium cum indignitate. I had thought in a green old age (O green thought!) to have retired to Ponder's End—emblematic name how beautiful! in the Ware road, there to have made up my accounts with Heaven and the Company, toddling about between it and Cheshunt, anon stretching on some fine Izaac Walton morning to Hoddesdon or Amwell, careless as a Beggar, but walking, walking ever, till I fairly walkd myself off my legs, dying walking!

The hope is gone. I sit like Philomel all day (but not singing) with my breast against this thorn of a Desk, with the only hope that some Pulmonary affliction may relieve me. Vide Lord Palmerston's report of the Clerks in the war office (Debates, this

morning's Times) by which it appears in 20 years, as many Clerks have been coughd and catarrhd out of it into their freer graves.

Thank you for asking about the Pictures. Milton hangs over my fire side in Covt. Gard. (when I am there), the rest have been sold for an old song, wanting the eloquent tongue that should have set them off!

You have gratifyd me with liking my meeting with Dodd. For the Malvolio story—the thing is become in verity a sad task and I eke it out with any thing. If I could slip out of it I sh^d be happy, but our chief reputed assistants have forsaken us. The opium eater crossed us once with a dazzling path, and hath as suddenly left us darkling; and in short I shall go on from dull to worse, because I cannot resist the Bookseller's importunity—the old plea you know of authors, but I believe on my part sincere.

Hartley I do not so often see, but I never see him in unwelcome hour. I thoroughly love and honor him.

I send you a frozen Epistle, but it is winter and dead time of the year with me. May heaven keep something like spring and summer up with you, strengthen your eyes and make mine a little lighter to encounter with them, as I hope they shall yet and again, before all are closed. Yours, with every kind rem^be. C. L.

I had almost forgot to say, I think you thoroughly right about presentation copies. I should like to see you print a book I should grudge to purchase for its size. D——n me, but I would have it though!

NOTE

[John Lamb's will left everything to his brother. We must suppose that his widow was independently provided for. I doubt if the brothers had seen each other except casually for some time. The *Elia* essay "My Relations" contains John Lamb's full-length portrait under the name of James Elia.

Captain Burney died on November 17, 1821.

"*Capite dolente*"—"With an aching head."

"*Tædet me harum quotidianarum formarum.*" See note on page 32.

"The foul enchanter—letters four do form his name." From Coleridge's war eclogue, "Fire, Famine and Slaughter," where the letters form the name of Pitt. Here they stand for Joseph Hume, not Lamb's friend, but Joseph Hume, M.P. (1777-1855), who had attacked with success abuses in the East India Company; had revised economically the system of collecting the revenue, thus touching Wordsworth as Distributor of Stamps; and had opposed Vansittart's scheme for the reduction of pension charges. Busirane is the enchanter in the *Fairy Queen*, Book III.

"*Otium cum indignitate.*" See note on page 479.

"*Vide* Lord Palmerston's report." In the *Times* of March 21 is the report of a debate on the estimates. Palmerston proved a certain amount of reduction of salary in the War Office. Incidentally he remarked that "since 1810 not fewer than twenty-six clerks had died of pulmonary complaints, and disorders arising from sedentary habits."

Milton was the portrait, already described (see page 457), which had been left to Lamb. Lamb gave it as a dowry to Emma Isola when she became Mrs. Moxon.

"My meeting with Dodd . . . Malvolio story." In the essay "The Old Actors," in the *London Magazine* for February, 1822 (see Vol. II. of this edition, page 136).

"Our chief reputed assistants." Hazlitt had left the *London Magazine*; Scott, the original editor, was dead.

De Quincey, whose *Confessions of an Opium-Eater* were appearing in its pages, has left a record of a visit to the Lambs about this time. See his "London Reminiscences."

"Hartley." Hartley Coleridge, then a young man of twenty-five, was living in London after the unhappy sudden termination of his Oxford career.

Here should come a letter from Lamb to William Godwin, dated April 13, in which Lamb remarks that he cannot think how Godwin, who in his writings never expresses himself disrespectfully of any one but his Maker, can have given offence to Rickman. This reminds one of Godwin's remark about Coleridge, "God bless him—to use a vulgar expression," as recorded by Coleridge in one of his letters.]

LETTER 268

CHARLES LAMB TO W. HARRISON AINSWORTH

[Dated at end: May 7, 1822.]

DEAR Sir,—I have read your poetry with pleasure. The tales are pretty and prettily told, the language often finely poetical. It is only sometimes a little careless, I mean as to redundancy. I have marked certain passages (in pencil only, which will easily obliterate) for your consideration. Excuse this liberty. For the distinction you offer me of a dedication, I feel the honor of it, but I do not think it would advantage the publication. I am hardly on an eminence enough to warrant it. The Reviewers, who are no friends of mine—the two big ones especially who make a

point of taking no notice of anything I bring out—may take occasion by it to decry us both. But I leave you to your own judgment. Perhaps, if you wish to give me a kind word, it will be more appropriate *before your republication of Tourneur.*

The "Specimens" would give a handle to it, which the poems might seem to want. But I submit it to yourself with the old recollection that "beggars should not be chusers" and remain with great respect and wishing success to both your publications

Your obe^t^. Ser^t^.

C. Lamb.

No hurry at all for Tourneur.

Tuesday 7 May '22.

Note

[William Harrison Ainsworth (1805-1882), afterwards known as a novelist, was then articled to a Manchester solicitor, but had begun his literary career. The book to which Lamb refers was called *The Works of Cheviot Tichburn*, 1822, and was dedicated to him in the following terms:—

TO MY FRIEND CHARLES LAMB,
AS A SLIGHT MARK
OF
GRATITUDE FOR HIS KINDNESS
AND
ADMIRATION OF HIS CHARACTER,
THESE POEMS ARE INSCRIBED.

Ainsworth was meditating an edition of the works of Cyril Tourneur, author of "The Atheist's Tragedy," to whom Lamb had drawn attention in the *Dramatic Specimens*, 1808. The book was never published.]

LETTER 269

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM GODWIN

May 16, 1822.

DEAR Godwin—I sincerely feel for all your trouble. Pray use the enclosed £50, and pay me when you can. I shall make it my business to see you very shortly.

Yours truly

C. Lamb.

NOTE

[Owing largely to a flaw in the title-deed of his house at 41 Skinner Street, which he had to forfeit, Godwin had come upon poverty greater than any he had previously suffered, although he had been always more or less necessitous. Lamb now lent him £50. In the following year, after being mainly instrumental in putting on foot a fund for Godwin's benefit, he transformed this loan into a gift. An appeal was issued in 1823 asking for £600, the following postscript to which, in Lamb's hand, is preserved at the South Kensington Museum:—

"There are few circumstances belonging to the case which are not sufficiently adverted to in the above letter.

"Mr. Godwin's opponent declares himself determined to act against him with the last degree of hostility: the law gives him the power the first week in November to seize upon Mr. Godwin's property, furniture, books, &c. together with all his present sources of income for the support of himself and his family. Mr. Godwin has at this time made considerable progress in a work of great research, and requiring all the powers of his mind, to the completion of which he had lookd for future pecuniary advantage. His mind is at this moment so entirely occupied in this work, that he feels within himself the firmness and resolution that no *prospect* of evil or calamity shall draw him off from it or suspend his labours. But *the calamity itself*, if permitted to arrive, will produce the physical impossibility for him to proceed. His books and the materials of his work, as well as his present sources of income, will be taken from him. Those materials have been the collection of several years, and it would require a long time to replace them, if they could ever be replaced.

"The favour of an early answer is particularly requested, that the extent of the funds supplied may as soon as possible be ascertained, particularly as any aid, however kindly intended, will, after the lapse of a very few weeks, become useless to the purpose in view."

The signatories to the appeal were: Crabb Robinson (£30), William Ayrton (£10), John Murray (£10 10s.), Charles Lamb (£50), Lord Francis Leveson-Gower (£10), Lord Dudley (£50), the Hon. W. Lamb (£20) and Sir James Mackintosh (£10). Other contributions were: Lord Byron, £26 5s.; T. M. Alsager, £10; and "A B C, by Charles Lamb," £10. A B C was Sir Walter Scott.

The work on which Godwin was then labouring was his *History of the Commonwealth*, 1824-1828. His new home was in the Strand. In 1833 he received the post of Yeoman Usher of the Exchequer, which he held till his death in 1836, although its duties had vanished ere then.]

LETTER 270

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. JOHN LAMB

22 May 1822.

DEAR Mrs. Lamb, A letter has come to Arnold for Mrs. Phillips, and, as I have not her address, I take this method of sending it to you. That old rogue's name is Sherwood, as you guessed, but as I named the shirts to him, I think he must have them. Your character of him made me almost repent of the bounty.

You must consider this letter as Mary's—for writing letters is such a trouble and puts her to such twitters (family modesty, you know; it is the way with me, but I try to get over it) that in pity I offer to do it for her.—

We hold our intention of seeing France, but expect to see you here first, as we do not go till the 20th of next month. A steam boat goes to Dieppe, I see.—

Christie has not sent to me, and I suppose is in no hurry to settle the account. I think in a day or two (if I do not hear from you to the contrary) I shall refresh his memory.

I am sorry I made you pay for two Letters. I Peated it, and re-peated it.

Miss Wright is married, and I am a hamper in her debt, which I hope will now not be remembered. She is in great good humour, I hear, and yet out of spirits.

Where shall I get such full flavor'd Geneva again?

Old Mr. Henshaw died last night precisely at ½ past 11.—He has been open'd by desire of Mrs. McKenna; and, where his heart should have been, was found a stone. Poor Arnold is inconsolable; and, not having shaved since, looks deplorable.

With our kind rememb^ces. to Caroline and your friends

We remain yours affectionaly C. L. AND M. LAMB.

[*Occupying the entire margin up the left-hand side of the letter is, in Mary Lamb's hand:*—]

I thank you for your kind letter, and owe you one in return, but Charles is in such a hurry to send this to be franked.

Your affec^ate sister

M. LAMB.

[*On the right-hand margin, beside the paragraph about Mr. Henshaw, is written in the same hand, underlined:*—]

He is not dead.

NOTE

[John Lamb's widow had been a Mrs. Dowden, with an unmarried daughter, probably the Caroline referred to. The letter treats of family matters which could not now be explained even if it were worth while. The Lambs were arranging a visit to Versailles, to the Kenneys. Mr. Henshaw was Lamb's godfather, a gunsmith.]

LETTER 271

(*Fragment*)

CHARLES LAMB TO MARY LAMB (IN PARIS).

[August, 1822.]

THEN you must walk all along the Borough side of the Seine facing the Tuileries. There is a mile and a half of print shops and book stalls. If the latter were but English. Then there is a place where the Paris people put all their dead people and bring em flowers and dolls and ginger bread nuts and sonnets and such trifles. And that is all I think worth seeing as sights, except that the streets and shops of Paris are themselves the best sight.

NOTE

[The Lambs had left England for France in June. While they were there Mary Lamb was taken ill again—in a diligence, according to Moore—and Lamb had to return home alone, leaving a letter, of which this is the only portion that has been preserved, for her guidance on her recovery. Mary Lamb, who had taken her nurse with her in case of trouble, was soon well again, and in August had the company of Crabb Robinson in Paris. Mrs. Aders was also there, and Foss, the bookseller in Pall Mall, and his brother. And it was on this visit that the Lambs met John Howard Payne, whom we shall shortly see.]

LETTER 272

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN CLARE

India House, 31 Aug., 1822.

DEAR Clare—I thank you heartily for your present. I am an inverate old Londoner, but while I am among your choice collections, I seem to be native to them, and free of the country.

The quantity of your observation has astonished me. What have most pleased me have been Recollections after a Ramble, and those Grongar Hill kind of pieces in eight syllable lines, my favourite measure, such as Cowper Hill and Solitude. In some of your story-telling Ballads the provincial phrases sometimes startle me. I think you are too profuse with them. In poetry *slang* of every kind is to be avoided. There is a rustick Cockneyism, as little pleasing as ours of London. Transplant Arcadia to Helpstone. The true rustic style, the Arcadian English, I think is to be found in Shenstone. Would his Schoolmistress, the prettiest of poems, have been better, if he had used quite the Goody's own language? Now and then a home rusticism is fresh and startling, but where nothing is gained in expression, it is out of tenor. It may make folks smile and stare, but the ungenial coalition of barbarous with refined phrases will prevent you in the end from being so generally tasted, as you deserve to be. Excuse my freedom, and take the same liberty with my *puns*.

I send you two little volumes of my spare hours. They are of all sorts, there is a methodist hymn for Sundays, and a farce for Saturday night. Pray give them a place on your shelf. Pray accept a little volume, of which I have [a] duplicate, that I may return in equal number to your welcome presents.

I think I am indebted to you for a sonnet in the London for August.

Since I saw you I have been in France, and have eaten frogs. The nicest little rabbity things you ever tasted. Do look about for them. Make Mrs. Clare pick off the hind quarters, boil them plain, with parsley and butter. The fore quarters are not so good. She may let them hop off by themselves.

Yours sincerely, CHAS. LAMB.

NOTE

[John Clare (1793-1864) was the Northamptonshire poet whom the *London Magazine* had introduced to fame. Octavius Gilchrist had played to him the same part that Capell Lofft had to Bloomfield. His first volume, *Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery*, was published in January, 1820; his next, *The Village Minstrel*, in September of the next year. These he had probably sent to Lamb. Helpstone was Clare's birthplace. Lamb's two little return volumes were his *Works*. The sonnet in the August *London Magazine* was not signed by Clare. It runs thus:—

TO ELIA

ELIA, thy reveries and vision'd themes
  To Care's lorn heart a luscious pleasure prove;
Wild as the mystery of delightful dreams,
  Soft as the anguish of remember'd love:
Like records of past days their memory dances
  Mid the cool feelings Manhood's reason brings,
As the unearthly visions of romances
  Peopled with sweet and uncreated things;—
And yet thy themes thy gentle worth enhances!
  Then wake again thy wild harp's tenderest strings,
Sing on, sweet Bard, let fairy loves again
  Smile in thy dreams, with angel ecstacies;
Bright o'er our souls will break the heavenly strain
  Through the dull gloom of earth's realities.

Clare addressed to Lamb a sonnet on his *Dramatic Specimens* which was printed in Hone's *Year Book* in 1831.

Here should come a letter from Lamb to Mrs. James Kenney, dated Sept. 11, 1822, in which Lamb says that Mary Lamb had reached home safely from France, and that she failed to smuggle Crabb Robinson's waistcoat. He adds that the Custom House people could not comprehend how a waistcoat, marked Henry Robinson, could be a part of Miss Lamb's wearing apparel. At the end of the letter is a charming note to Mrs. Kenney's little girl, Sophy, whom Lamb calls his dear wife. He assures her that the few short days of connubial felicity which he passed with her among the pears and apricots of Versailles were some of the happiest of his life.]

LETTER 273

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

India House, 11 Sept. 1822.

DEAR Sir—You have misapprehended me sadly, if you suppose that I meant to impute any inconsistency (in your writing poetry) with your religious profession. I do not remember what I said, but it was spoken sportively, I am sure. One of my levities, which you are not so used to as my older friends. I probably was thinking of the light in which your so indulging yourself would appear to *Quakers*, and put their objection in my own foolish mouth. I would eat my words (provided they should be written on not very coarse paper) rather than I would throw cold water upon your, and my once, harmless occupation. I have read Napoleon and the rest with delight. I like them for what they are, and for what they are not. I have sickened on the modern rhodomontade & Byron-

ism, and your plain Quakerish Beauty has captivated me. It is all wholesome cates, aye, and toothsome too, and withal Quakerish. If I were George Fox, and George Fox Licenser of the Press, they should have my absolute IMPRIMATUR. I hope I have removed the impression.

I am, like you, a prisoner to the desk. I have been chained to that gally thirty years, a long shot. I have almost grown to the wood. If no imaginative poet, I am sure I am a figurative one. Do "Friends" allow puns? *verbal* equivocations?—they are unjustly accused of it, and I did my little best in the "imperfect Sympathies" to vindicate them.

I am very tired of clerking it, but have no remedy. Did you see a sonnet to this purpose in the Examiner?—

"*Who* first invented Work—and tied the free
And holy-day rejoycing spirit down
To the ever-haunting importunity
Of business, in the green fields, and the town—
To plough—loom—anvil—spade—&, oh, most sad,
To this dry drudgery of the desk's dead wood?
Who but the Being Unblest, alien from good,
Sabbathless Satan! he who his unglad
Task ever plies 'mid rotatory burnings,
That round and round incalculably reel—
For wrath Divine hath made him like a wheel—
In that red realm from whence are no returnings;
Where toiling and turmoiling ever and aye
He, and his Thoughts, keep pensive worky-day."

C. L.

I fancy the sentiment exprest above will be nearly your own, the expression of it probably would not so well suit with a follower of John Woolman. But I do not know whether diabolism is a part of your creed, or where indeed to find an exposition of your creed at all. In feelings and matters not dogmatical, I hope I am half a Quaker. Believe me, with great respect, yours

C. LAMB.

I shall always be happy to see, or hear from you.—

NOTE

[This is the first of the letters to Bernard Barton (1784-1849), a clerk in a bank at Woodbridge, in Suffolk, who was known as the Quaker poet. Lamb had met him at a *London Magazine* dinner at 13 Waterloo Place, and had apparently said something about Quakers and poetry which Barton, on thinking it over, had taken too seriously. Bernard Barton was already the author of four volumes of poetry, of which *Napoleon and other Poems* was the latest, published in 1822. Lamb's essay on "Imperfect Sympathies" had been printed in the *London Magazine* for August, 1821. For John Woolman see note on page 94. The sonnet "Work" had been printed in the *Examiner*, August 29, 1819.]

LETTER 274

CHARLES LAMB TO BARRON FIELD

Sept. 22, 1822.

MY dear F.,—I scribble hastily at office. Frank wants my letter presently. I & sister are just returned from Paris!! We have eaten frogs. It has been such a treat! You know our monotonous general Tenor. Frogs are the nicest little delicate things—rabbity-flavoured. Imagine a Lilliputian rabbit! They fricassee them; but in my mind, drest seethed, plain, with parsley and butter, would have been the decision of Apicius. Shelley the great Atheist has gone down by water to eternal fire! Hunt and his young fry are left stranded at Pisa, to be adopted by the remaining duumvir, Lord Byron—his wife and 6 children & their maid. What a cargo of Jonases, if they had foundered too! The only use I can find of friends, is that they do to borrow money of you. Henceforth I will consort with none but rich rogues. Paris is a glorious picturesque old City. London looks mean and New to it, as the town of Washington would, seen after *it*. But they have no St. Paul's or Westminster Abbey. The Seine, so much despised by Cockneys, is exactly the size to run thro' a magnificent street; palaces a mile long on one side, lofty Edinbro' stone (O the glorious antiques!): houses on the other. The Thames disunites London & Southwark. I had Talma to supper with me. He has picked up, as I believe, an authentic portrait of Shakspere. He paid a broker about £40 English for it. It is painted on the one half of a pair of bellows—a lovely picture, corresponding with the Folio head. The bellows has old carved *wings* round it, and round the visnomy is inscribed, near as I remember, not divided into rhyme—I found out the rhyme—

> "Whom have we here,
> Stuck on this bellows,
> But the Prince of good fellows,
> Willy Shakspere?"

At top—

> "O base and coward luck!
> To be here stuck.—POINS."

At bottom—

> "Nay! rather a glorious lot is to him assign'd,
> Who, like the Almighty, rides upon the *wind*.—PISTOL."

This is all in old carved wooden letters. The countenance smiling, sweet, and intellectual beyond measure, even as He was

immeasurable. It may be a forgery. They laugh at me and tell me Ireland is in Paris, and has been putting off a portrait of the Black Prince. How far old wood may be imitated I cannot say. Ireland was not found out by his parchments, but by his poetry. I am confident no painter on either side the Channel could have painted any thing near like the face I saw. Again, would such a painter and forger have expected £40 for a thing, if authentic, worth £4000? Talma is not in the secret, for he had not even found out the rhymes in the first inscription. He is coming over with it, and, my life to Southey's Thalaba, it will gain universal faith.

The letter is wanted, and I am wanted. Imagine the blank filled up with all kind things.

Our joint hearty remembrances to both of you. Yours as ever,

C. Lamb.

Note

[Frank would be Francis John Field, Barron Field's brother, in the India House.

Shelley was drowned on July 8, 1822.

Talma was François Joseph Talma (1763-1826), the great French tragedian. Lamb, introduced by John Howard Payne, saw him in "Regulus," but not understanding French was but mildly interested. "Ah," said Talma in the account by James Kenney printed in Henry Angelo's *Pic Nic*, "I was not very happy to-night; you must see me in 'Scylla.'" "Incidit in Scyllam," said Lamb, "qui vult vitare Charybdim." "Ah, you are a rogue; you are a great rogue," was Talma's reply. Talma had bought a pair of bellows with Shakespeare's head on it. Lamb's belief in the authenticity of this portrait was misplaced, as the following account from *Chambers' Journal* for September 27, 1856, will show:—

About the latter part of the last century, one Zincke, an artist of little note, but grandson of the celebrated enameller of that name, manufactured fictitious Shakespeares by the score. . . . The most famous of Zincke's productions is the well-known Talma Shakespeare, which gentle Charles Lamb made a pilgrimage to Paris to see; and when he did see, knelt down and kissed with idolatrous veneration. Zincke painted it on a larger panel than was necessary for the size of the picture, and then cut away the superfluous wood, so as to leave the remainder in the shape of a pair of bellows. . . . Zincke probably was thinking of "a muse of fire" when he adopted this strange method of raising the wind; but he made little by it, for the dealer into whose hands the picture passed, sold it as a curiosity, not an original portrait, for £5. The buyer, being a person of ingenuity, and fonder of money than curiosities, fabricated a series of letters to and from Sir Kenelm Digby, and, passing over to France, *planted*—the slang term used among the less honest of the curiosity-dealing fraternity—the picture and the letters in an old château near Paris. Of course a confederate managed to discover the *plant*, in the presence of witnesses, and great was the excitement that ensued. Sir Kenelm Digby had been in France in the reign of Charles I., and the fictitious correspondence *proved* that the picture

THE BELLOWS PORTRAIT OF SHAKESPEARE

FROM THE ORIGINAL IN THE POSSESSION OF MR. B. B. MACGEORGE

was an original, and had been painted by Queen Elizabeth's command, on the lid of her favourite pair of bellows!

It really would seem that the more absurd a deception is, the better it succeeds. All Paris was in delight at possessing an original Shakespeare, while the London amateurs were in despair at such a treasure being lost to England. The ingenious person soon found a purchaser, and a high price recompensed him for his trouble. But more remains to be told. The happy purchaser took his treasure to Ribet, the first Parisian picture-cleaner of the day, to be cleaned. Ribet set to work; but we may fancy his surprise as the superficial *impasto* of Zincke washed off beneath the sponge, and Shakespeare became a female in a lofty headgear adorned with blue ribbons.

In a furious passion the purchaser ran to the seller. "Let us talk over the affair quietly," said the latter; "I have been cheated as well as you: let us keep the matter secret; if we let the public know it, all Paris and even London too, will be laughing at us. I will return you your money, and take back the picture, if you will employ Ribet to restore it to the same condition as it was in when you received it." This fair proposition was acceded to, and Ribet restored the picture; but as he was a superior artist to Zincke, he greatly improved it, and this improvement was attributed to his skill as a cleaner. The secret being kept, and the picture, improved by cleaning, being again in the market, Talma, the great Tragedian, purchased it at even a higher price than that given by the first buyer. Talma valued it highly, enclosed it in a case of morocco and gold, and subsequently refused 1000 Napoleons for it; and even when at last its whole history was disclosed, he still cherished it as a genuine memorial of the great bard.

By kind permission of Mr. B. B. MacGeorge, who now owns both letter and bellows, I am enabled to give a reproduction of the portrait on the opposite page. See also Lamb's remarks on page 579.

Ireland was the author of "Vortigern," the forged play attributed to Shakespeare (see note on page 5).]

LETTER 275

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

[Autumn, 1822.]

DEAR Payne—A friend and fellow-clerk of mine, Mr. White (a good fellow) coming to your parts, I would fain have accompanied him, but am forced instead to send a part of me, verse and prose, most of it from 20 to 30 years old, such as I then was, and I am not much altered.

Paris, which I hardly knew whether I liked when I was in it, is an object of no small magnitude with me now. I want to be going, to the Jardin des Plantes (is that right, Louisa?) with you—to Pere de la Chaise, La Morgue, and all the sentimentalities. How is Talma, and his (my) dear Shakspeare?

N.B.—My friend White knows Paris thoroughly, and does not want a guide. We did, and had one. We both join in thanks. Do you remember a Blue-Silk Girl (English) at the Luxembourg,

that did not much seem to attend to the Pictures, who fell in love with you, and whom I fell in love with—an inquisitive, prying, curious Beauty—where is she?

Votre Très Humble Serviteur,

CHARLOIS AGNEAU,
alias C. LAMB.

Guichy is well, and much as usual. He seems blind to all the distinctions of life, except to those of sex. Remembrance to Kenny and Poole.

NOTE

[John Howard Payne (1792-1852) was born in New York. He began life as an actor in 1809 as Young Norval in "Douglas," and made his English *début* in 1813 in the same part. For several years he lived either in London or Paris, where among his friends were Washington Irving and Talma. He wrote a number of plays, and in one of them, "Clari, or the Maid of Milan," is the song "Home, Sweet Home," with Bishop's music, on which his immortality rests. Payne died in Tunis, where he was American Consul, in 1852, and when in 1883 he was reinterred at Washington, it was as the author of "Home, Sweet Home." He seems to have been a charming but ill-starred man, whom to know was to love.

Mr. White was Edward White of the India House, by whom Lamb probably sent a copy of the 1818 edition of his *Works*. Louisa was Louisa Holcroft. Guichy was possibly the Frenchman, mentioned by Crabb Robinson, with whom the Lambs had travelled to France. Poole was, I imagine, John Poole, the dramatist, author of burlesque plays in the *London Magazine* and later of "Paul Pry," which, it is quite likely, he based on Lamb's sketch "Tom Pry."]

LETTER 276

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[Dated at end: 9 October 1822.]

DEAR Sir—I am asham'd not sooner to have acknowledged your letter and poem. I think the latter very temperate, very serious and very seasonable. I do not think it will convert the club at Pisa, neither do I think it will satisfy the bigots on our side the water. Something like a parody on the song of Ariel would please them better.

Full fathom five the Atheist lies,
Of his bones are hell-dice made.—

I want time, or fancy, to fill up the rest. I sincerely sympathise with you on your doleful confinement. Of Time, Health, and Riches, the first in order is not last in excellence. Riches are chiefly good, because they give us Time. What a weight of wearisome prison hours have [I] to look back and forward to, as quite cut out [of] life—and the sting of the thing is, that for six hours every day I have no business which I could not contract into two, if they would let me work Task-work. I shall be glad to hear that your grievance is mitigated.

Shelly I saw once. His voice was the most obnoxious squeak I ever was tormented with, ten thousand times worse than the Laureat's, whose voice is the worst part about him, except his Laureatcy. Lord Byron opens upon him on Monday in a Parody (I suppose) of the "Vision of Judgment," in which latter the Poet I think did not much show *his*. To award his Heaven and his Hell in the presumptuous manner he has done, was a piece of immodesty as bad as Shelleyism.

I am returning a poor letter. I was formerly a great Scribbler in that way, but my hand is out of order. If I said my head too, I should not be very much out, but I will tell no tales of myself. I will therefore end (after my best thanks, with a hope to see you again some time in London), begging you to accept this Letteret for a Letter—a Leveret makes a better present than a grown hare, and short troubles (as the old excuse goes) are best.

I hear that C. Lloyd is well, and has returned to his family. I think this will give you pleasure to hear.

I remain, dear Sir, yours truly C. Lamb.

E. I. H.
9 Oct. 22.

Note

[Barton had just published his *Verses on the Death of P. B. Shelley*, a lament for misapplied genius. The club at Pisa referred particularly to Byron, Leigh Hunt and Trelawney. Trelawney placed three lines from Ariel's song in "The Tempest" on Shelley's monument; but whether Lamb knew this, or his choice of rival lines is a coincidence, I do not know. Trelawney chose the lines:—

> Nothing of him that doth fade
> But doth suffer a sea-change
> Into something rich and strange.

There is no other record of Lamb's meeting with Shelley, who, by the way, admired Lamb's writings warmly, particularly *Mrs. Leicester's School* (see Letter 334).

Byron's *Vision of Judgment*, a burlesque of Southey's poem of the same name, was printed in *The Liberal* for 1822.]

LETTER 277

CHARLES LAMB TO B. R. HAYDON

India House, 9th October, 1822.

DEAR Haydon, Poor Godwin has been turned out of his house and business in Skinner Street, and if he does not pay two years' arrears of rent, he will have the whole stock, furniture, &c., of his new house (in the Strand) seized when term begins. We are trying to raise a subscription for him. My object in writing this is simply to ask you, if this is a kind of case which would be likely to interest Mrs. Coutts in his behalf; and *who* in your opinion is the best person to speak with her on his behalf. Without the aid of from £300 to £400 by that time, early in November, he must be ruined. You are the only person I can think of, of her acquaintance, and can, perhaps, if not yourself, recommend the person most likely to influence her. Shelley had engaged to clear him of all demands, and he has gone down to the deep insolvent.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

Is Sir Walter to be applied to, and by what channel?

NOTE

[See note to Letter 269. Mrs. Coutts was probably Harriot Mellon, the actress, widow of the banker, Thomas Coutts, and afterwards Duchess of St. Albans. She had played the part of the heroine Melesinda in "Mr. H."]

LETTER 278

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

Thursday [Oct. 22], 1822.

"ALI Pacha" will do. I sent my sister the first night, not having been able to go myself, and her report of its effect was most favourable. I saw it last night—the third night—and it was most satisfactorily received. I have been sadly disappointed in Talfourd, who does the critiques in the "Times," and who promised his strenuous services; but by some damn'd arrangement he was sent to the wrong house, and a most iniquitous account of Ali substituted for his, which I am sure would have been a kind one. The "Morning Herald" did it ample justice, without ap-

pearing to puff it. It is an abominable misrepresentation of the "Times," that Farren played Ali like Lord Ogilby. He acted infirmity of body, but not of voice or purpose. His manner was even grand. A grand old gentleman. His falling to the earth when his son's death was announced was fine as anything I ever saw. It was as if he had been blasted. Miss Foote looked helpless and beautiful, and greatly helped the piece. It is going on steadily, I am sure, for *many nights*. Marry, I was a little disappointed with Hassan, who tells us he subsists by cracking court jests before Hali, but he made none. In all the rest, scenery and machinery, it was faultless. I hope it will bring you here. I should be most glad of that. I have a room for you, and you shall order your own dinner three days in the week. I must retain my own authority for the rest. As far as magazines go, I can answer for Talfourd in the "New Monthly." He cannot be put out there. But it is established as a favourite, and can do without these expletives. I long to talk over with you the Shakspeare Picture. My doubts of its being a forgery mainly rest upon the goodness of the picture. The bellows might be trumped up, but where did the painter spring from? Is Ireland a consummate artist—or any of Ireland's accomplices?—but we shall confer upon it, I hope. The "New Times," I understand was favorable to "Ali," but I have not seen it. I am sensible of the want of method in this letter, but I have been deprived of the connecting organ, by a practice I have fallen into since I left Paris, of taking too much strong spirits of a night. I must return to the Hotel de l'Europe and Macon.

How is Kenney? Have you seen my friend White? What is Poole about, &c.? Do not write, but come and answer me.

The weather is charming, and there is a mermaid to be seen in London. You may not have the opportunity of inspecting such a *Poisarde* once again in ten centuries.

My sister joins me in the hope of seeing you.

Yours truly, C. Lamb.

Note

[Lamb had met John Howard Payne, the American dramatist, at Kenney's, in France (see note on page 576). "Ali Pacha," a melodrama in two acts, was produced at Covent Garden on October 19, 1822. It ran altogether sixteen nights. William Farren played the hero. Lord Ogleby, an antiquated fop, is a character in "The Clandestine Marriage" by Colman and Garrick. Miss Foote played Helena. See also notes to the letter on page 576 for other references.]

LETTERS 279 AND 280

CHARLES LAMB TO B. R. HAYDON

Tuesday, 29th [October, 1822].

DEAR H., I have written a very respectful letter to Sir W. S. Godwin did not write, because he leaves all to his committee, as I will explain to you. If this rascally weather holds, you will see but one of us on that day.

Yours, with many thanks,

C. LAMB.

CHARLES LAMB TO SIR WALTER SCOTT

East India House, London,
29th October 1822.

DEAR Sir,—I have to acknowledge your kind attention to my application to Mr. Haydon. I have transmitted your draft to Mr. G[odwin]'s committee as an anonymous contribution through me. Mr. Haydon desires his thanks and best respects to you, but was desirous that I should write to you on this occasion. I cannot pass over your kind expressions as to myself. It is not likely that I shall ever find myself in Scotland, but should the event ever happen, I should be proud to pay my respects to you in your own land. My disparagement of heaths and highlands—if I said any such thing in half earnest,—you must put down as a piece of the old Vulpine policy. I must make the most of the spot I am chained to, and console myself for my flat destiny as well as I am able. I know very well our mole-hills are not mountains, but I must cocker them up and make them look as big and as handsome as I can, that we may both be satisfied. Allow me to express the pleasure I feel on an occasion given me of writing to you, and to subscribe myself, dear sir, your obliged and respectful servant,

CHARLES LAMB.

NOTE

[See note to Letter 269, on page 567. Lamb and Scott never met. Talfourd, however, tells us that "he used to speak with gratitude and pleasure of the circumstances under which he saw him once in Fleet-street. A man, in the dress of a mechanic, stopped him just at Inner Temple-gate, and said, touching his hat, 'I beg your pardon, sir, but perhaps you would like to see Sir Walter Scott; that is he just crossing the road;' and Lamb stammered out his hearty thanks to his truly humane informer."

Mr. Lang has recently discovered that also in 1818 or thereabouts Sir Walter invited Lamb to Abbotsford.

"The old Vulpine policy." A reference to the fable of the Fox and the Grapes.]

LETTER 281

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ROBINSON

[Dated at end: Nov. 11, 1822.]

DEAR Sir, We have to thank you, or Mrs. Robinson—for I think her name was on the direction—for the best pig, which myself, the warmest of pig-lovers, ever tasted. The dressing and the sauce were pronounced incomparable by two friends, who had the good fortune to drop in to dinner yesterday, but I must not mix up my cook's praises with my acknowledgments; let me but have leave to say that she and we did your pig justice. I should dilate on the crackling—done to a turn—but I am afraid Mrs. Clarkson, who, I hear, is with you, will set me down as an Epicure. Let it suffice, that you have spoil'd my appetite for boiled mutton for some time to come. Your brother Henry partook of the cold relics—by which he might give a good guess at what it had been *hot*.

With our thanks, pray convey our kind respects to Mrs. Robinson, and the Lady before mentioned.

Your obliged Sert

CHARLES LAMB.

India House
11 Nov. 22.

NOTE

[This letter is addressed to R. Robinson, Esq., Bury, Suffolk, but I think there is no doubt that Thomas Robinson was the recipient.

Thomas Robinson of Bury St. Edmunds was Henry Crabb Robinson's brother. Lamb's "Dissertation on Roast Pig" had been printed in the *London Magazine* in September, 1822, and this pig was one of the first of many such gifts that came to him.]

LETTER 282

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

Wednesday, 13 November, '22.

DEAR P.—Owing to the inconvenience of having two lodgings, I did not get your letter quite so soon as I should. The India House is my proper address, where I am sure for the fore part

of every day. The instant I got it, I addressed a letter, for Kemble to see, to my friend Henry Robertson, the Treasurer of Covent Garden Theatre. He had a conference with Kemble, and the result is, that Robertson, in the name of the management, recognized to me the full ratifying of your bargain: £250 for Ali, the Slaves, and another piece which they had not received. He assures me the whole will be paid you, or the proportion for the two former, as soon as ever the Treasury will permit it. He offered to write the same to you, if I pleased. He thinks in a month or so they will be able to liquidate it. He is positive no trick could be meant you, as Mr. Planché's alterations, which were trifling, were not at all considered as affecting your bargain. With respect to the copyright of Ali, he was of opinion no money would be given for it, as Ali is quite laid aside. This explanation being given, you would not think of printing the two copies together by way of recrimination. He told me the secret of the two Galley Slaves at Drury Lane. Elliston, if he is informed right, engaged Poole to translate it, but before Poole's translation arrived, finding it coming out at Cov. Gar., he procured copies of two several translations of it in London. So you see here are four translations, reckoning yours. I fear no copyright would be got for it, for anybody may print it and anybody has. Your's has run seven nights, and R. is of opinion it will not exceed in number of nights the nights of Ali,—about thirteen. But your full right to your bargain with the management is in the fullest manner recognized by him officially. He gave me every hope the money will be spared as soon as they can spare it. He said *a month or two*, but seemed to me to mean about *a month*. A new lady is coming out in Juliet, to whom they look very confidently for replenishing their treasury. Robertson is a very good fellow and I can rely upon his statement. Should you have any more pieces, and want to get a copyright for them, I am the worst person to negotiate with any bookseller, having been cheated by all I have had to do with (except Taylor and Hessey,—but they do not publish theatrical pieces), and I know not how to go about it, or who to apply to. But if you had no better negotiator, I should know the minimum you expect, for I should not like to make a bargain out of my own head, being (after the Duke of Wellington) the worst of all negotiators. I find from Robertson you have written to Bishop on the subject. Have you named anything of the copyright of the Slaves. R. thinks no publisher would pay for it, and you would not risque it on your own account. This is a mere business letter, so I will just send my love to my little wife at Versailles, to her dear mother, etc.

Believe me, yours truly, C. L.

NOTE

[Payne's translation of the French play was produced at Covent Garden on November 6, 1822, under the title "The Soldier's Daughter." On the same night appeared a rival version at Drury Lane entitled "Two Galley Slaves." Payne's was played eleven times. The new lady as Juliet was the other Fanny Kelly not Lamb's: Fanny H. Kelly, from Dublin. The revival began on November 14. Planché was James Robinson Planché (1796-1880), the most prolific of librettists. Robert William Elliston, of whom Lamb later wrote so finely, was then managing Drury Lane.

"Having been cheated." Lamb's particular reference was to Baldwin (see Letter 290).

"The Duke of Wellington." A reference to the Duke's failure in representing England at the Congress of Powers in Vienna and Verona.

Lamb's "dear little wife" was Sophy Kenney (see abstract of letter on page 571).]

LETTER 283

MARY LAMB TO MRS. JAMES KENNEY

[No date. ? Early December, 1822.]

MY dear Friend,—How do you like Harwood? Is he not a noble boy? I congratulate you most heartily on this happy meeting, and only wish I were present to witness it. Come back with Harwood, I am dying to see you—we will talk, that is, you shall talk and I will listen from ten in the morning till twelve at night. My thoughts are often with you, and your children's dear faces are perpetually before me. Give them all one additional kiss every morning for me. Remember there's one for Louisa, one to Ellen, one to Betsy, one to Sophia, one to James, one to Teresa, one to Virginia, and one to Charles. Bless them all! When shall I ever see them again? Thank you a thousand times for all your kindness to me. I know you will make light of the trouble my illness gave you; but the recollection of it often sits heavy on my heart. If I could ensure my health, how happy should I be to spend a month with you every summer!

When I met Mr. Kenney there, I sadly repented that I had not dragged you on to Dieppe with me. What a pleasant time we should have spent there!

You shall not be jealous of Mr. Payne. Remember he did Charles and I good service without grudge or grumbling. Say

to him how much I regret that we owe him unreturnable obligations; for I still have my old fear that we shall never see him again. I received great pleasure from seeing his two successful pieces. My love to your boy Kenney, my boy James, and all my dear girls, and also to Rose; I hope she still drinks wine with you. Thank Lou-Lou for her little bit of letter. I am in a fearful hurry, or I would write to her. Tell my friend the Poetess that I expect some French verses from her shortly. I have shewn Betsy's and Sophy's letters to all who came near me, and they have been very much admired. Dear Fanny brought me the bag. Good soul you are to think of me! Manning has promised to make Fanny a visit this morning, happy girl! Miss James I often see, I think never without talking of you. Oh the dear long dreary Boulevards! how I do wish to be just now stepping out of a Cuckoo into them!

Farewel, old tried friend, may we meet again! Would you could bring your house with all its noisy inmates, and plant it, garden, gables and all, in the midst of Covent Garden.

Yours ever most affectionately,

M. Lamb.

My best respects to your good neighbours.

Note

[Harwood would be Harwood Holcroft.

"Louisa," etc. Mrs. Kenney's children by her first marriage were Louisa, Ellen, Betsy and Sophia. By her second, with Kenney, the others. Charles was named Charles Lamb Kenney.

"Payne's two successful pieces"—"Ali Pasha" and "The Soldier's Daughter."

Fanny would be Fanny Holcroft, Mrs. Kenney's stepdaughter.

Miss Kelly has added to this letter a few words of affection to Mrs. Kenney from "the real old original Fanny Kelly."

Charles Lamb also contributed to this letter a few lines to James Kenney, expressing his readiness to meet Moore the poet. He adds that he made a hit at him as Little in the *London Magazine*, which though no reason for not meeting him was a reason for not volunteering a visit to him. The reference is to the sonnet to Barry Cornwall in the *London Magazine* for September, 1820, beginning—

> Let hate, or grosser heats, their foulness mask
> Neath riddling Junius, or in L——e's name.

The second line was altered in Lamb's *Album Verses*, 1830, to—

> Under the vizor of a borrowed name.]

LETTER 284

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN TAYLOR

[Dated: Dec. 7, 1822.]

DEAR Sir,—I should like the enclosed Dedication to be printed, unless you dislike it. I like it. It is in the olden style. But if you object to it, put forth the book as it is. Only pray don't let the Printer mistake the word *curt* for *curst*.

C. L.

Dec. 7, 1822.

DEDICATION

TO THE FRIENDLY AND JUDICIOUS READER,

Who will take these Papers, as they were meant; not understanding every thing perversely in the absolute and literal sense, but giving fair construction as to an after-dinner conversation; allowing for the rashness and necessary incompleteness of first thoughts; and not remembering, for the purpose of an after taunt, words spoken peradventure after the fourth glass. The Author wishes (what he would will for himself) plenty of good friends to stand by him, good books to solace him, prosperous events to all his honest undertakings, and a candid interpretation to his most hasty words and actions. The other sort (and he hopes many of them will purchase his book too) he greets with the curt invitation of Timon, "Uncover, dogs, and lap:" or he dismisses them with the confident security of the philosopher, "you beat but on the case of ELIA."

C. L.

Dec. 7, 1822.

NOTE

[*Elia. Essays which have appeared under that signature in the London Magazine* was just about to be published. The book came out with no preface.

"Uncover, dogs, and lap" ("Timon of Athens," III., 6, 95).

"You beat but on the case." When Anaxarchus, the philosopher, was being pounded to death in a mortar, by command of Alexander the Great, he made use of this phrase. After these words, in Canon Ainger's transcript, Lamb remarks:—

"On better consideration, pray omit that Dedication. The Essays want no Preface: they are *all Preface*. A Preface is nothing but a talk with the reader; and they do nothing else. Pray omit it.

"There will be a sort of Preface in the next Magazine, which may act as an advertisement, but not proper for the volume.

"Let ELIA come forth bare as he was born."

The sort of Preface in the next magazine (January, 1823) was the "Character of the Late Elia," used as a preface to the *Last Essays* in 1833.]

LETTER 285

CHARLES LAMB TO WALTER WILSON

E. I. H. 16 dec. 22.

DEAR Wilson

Lightening I was going to call you—

You must have thought me negligent in not answering your letter sooner. But I have a habit of never writing letters, but at the office—'tis so much time cribbed out of the Company—and I am but just got out of the thick of a Tea Sale, in which most of the Entry of Notes, deposits &c. usually falls to my share. Dodwell is willing, but alas! slow. To compare a pile of my notes with his little hillock (which has been as long a building), what is it but to compare Olympus with a mole-hill. Then Wadd is a sad shuffler.—

I have nothing of Defoe's but two or three Novels, and the Plague History. I can give you no information about him. As a slight general character of what I remember of them (for I have not look'd into them latterly) I would say that "in the appearance of *truth* in all the incidents and conversations that occur in them they exceed any works of fiction I am acquainted with. It is perfect illusion. The *Author* never appears in these self-narratives (for so they ought to be called or rather Auto-biographies) but the *narrator* chains us down to an implicet belief in every thing he says. There is all the minute detail of a log-book in it. Dates are painfully pressed upon the memory. Facts are repeated over and over in varying phrases, till you cannot chuse but believe them. It is like reading Evidence given in a Court of Justice. So anxious the story-teller seems, that the truth should be clearly comprehended, that when he has told us a matter of fact, or a motive, in a line or two farther down he *repeats* it with his favorite figure of speech, 'I say' so and so,—though he had made it abundantly plain before. This is in imitation of the common people's way of speaking, or rather of the way in which they are addressed by a master or mistress, who wishes to impress something upon their memories; and has a wonderful effect upon matter-of-fact readers. Indeed it is to such principally that he writes. His style is else-

where beautiful, but plain & *homely*. Robinson Crusoe is delightful to all ranks and classes, but it is easy to see that it is written in phraseology peculiarly adapted to the lower conditions of readers: hence it is an especial favorite with sea-faring men, poor boys, servant maids &c. His novels are capital kitchen-reading, while they are worthy from their deep interest to find a shelf in the Libraries of the wealthiest, and the most learned. His passion for *matter of fact narrative* sometimes betrayed him into a long relation of common incidents which might happen to any man, and have no interest but the intense appearance of truth in them, to recommend them. The whole latter half, or two thirds, of Colonel Jack is of this description. The beginning of Colonel Jack is the most affecting natural picture of a young thief that was ever drawn. His losing the stolen money in the hollow of a tree, and finding it again when he was in despair, and then being in equal distress at not knowing how to dispose of it, and several similar touches in the early history of the Colonel, evince a deep knowledge of human nature; and, putting out of question the superior *romantic* interest of the latter, in my mind very much exceed Crusoe. Roxana (1st Edition) is the next in Interest, though he left out the best part of it subsequent Editions from a foolish hypercriticism of his friend, Southerne. But Moll Flanders, the account of the Plague &c. &c. are all of one family, and have the same stamp of character."—

[*At the top of the first page is added* :—]

Omitted at the end . . . believe me with friendly recollections, *Brother* (as I used to call you) Yours C. Lamb.

[*Below the "Dear Wilson" is added in smaller writing* :—]
The review was not mine, nor have I seen it.

Note

[Addressed to "Walter Wilson Esqr Lufton n^r Yeovil Somersetshire."

Lamb's friend Walter Wilson (see note on page 220) was beginning his *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel Defoe*, 1830. The passage sent to him in this letter by Lamb he printed in Vol. III., page 428. Some years later (see pages 464 and 819) Lamb sent Wilson a further criticism. See also Letter 294 for the reference to *Roxana*.

For Dodwell see page 490. Of Wadd we have no information, except, according to Crabb Robinson's *Diary*, that he once acci-

dentally discharged a pen full of ink into Lamb's eye and that Lamb wrote this epigram upon him :—

What Wadd knows, God knows,
But God knows *what* Wadd knows.]

LETTER 286

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[Dated at end: 23 December 1822.]

DEAR Sir—I have been so distracted with business and one thing or other, I have not had a quiet quarter of an hour for epistolary purposes. Christmas too is come, which always puts a rattle into my morning scull. It is a visiting unquiet un-Quakerish season. I get more and more in love with solitude, and proportionately hampered with company. I hope you have some holydays at this period. I have one day, Christmas day, alas! too few to commemorate the season. All work and no play dulls me. Company is not play, but many times hard work. To play, is for a man to do what he pleases, or to do nothing—to go about soothing his particular fancies. I have lived to a time of life, to have outlived the good hours, the nine o'Clock suppers, with a bright hour or two to clear up in afterwards. Now you cannot get tea before that hour, and then sit gaping, music-bothered perhaps, till half-past 12 brings up the tray, and what you steal of convivial enjoyment after, is heavily paid for in the disquiet of to-morrow's head.

I am pleased with your liking John Woodvil, and amused with your knowledge of our drama being confined to Shakspeare and Miss Bailly. What a world of fine territory between Land's End and Johnny Grots have you missed traversing. I almost envy you to have so much to read. I feel as if I had read all the Books I want to read. O to forget Fielding, Steele, &c., and read 'em new.

Can you tell me a likely place where I could pick up, cheap, Fox's Journal? There are no Quaker Circulating Libraries? Ellwood, too, I must have. I rather grudge that S[outhe]y has taken up the history of your People. I am afraid he will put in some Levity. I am afraid I am not quite exempt from that fault in certain magazine Articles, where I have introduced mention of them. Were they to do again, I would reform them.

Why should not you write a poetical Account of your old Worthies, deducing them from Fox to Woolman?—but I remember you did talk of something in that kind, as a counterpart to the

Ecclesiastical Sketches. But would not a Poem be more consecutive than a string of Sonnets? You have no Martyrs *quite to the Fire*, I think, among you. But plenty of Heroic Confessors, Spirit-Martyrs—Lamb-Lions.—Think of it.

It would be better than a series of Sonnets on "Eminent Bankers." —I like a hit at our way of life, tho' it does well for me, better than anything short of *all one's time to one's self*, for which alone I rankle with envy at the rich. Books are good, and Pictures are good, and Money to buy them therefore good, but to buy *TIME!* in other words, LIFE—

The "compliments of the time to you" should end my letter; to a Friend I suppose I must say the "sincerity of the season;" I hope they both mean the same. With excuses for this hastily penn'd note, believe me with great respect— C. LAMB.

23 dec. 22.

NOTE

[Miss Bailly would be Joanna Baillie (1762-1851), author of *Plays on the Passions*.

The copy of Fox's *Journal*, 1694, which was lent to Lamb has recently come into the possession of the Society of Friends. In it is written: "This copy of George Fox's Journal, being the earliest edition of that work, the property of John T. Shewell of Ipswich, is lent for six months to Charles Lamb, at the request of Saml Alexander of Needham, Ipswich, 1st mo. 4 1823." Lamb has added: "Returned by Charles Lamb, within the period, with many thanks to the Lender for the very great satisfaction which he has derived from the perusal of it."

Southey was meditating a Life of George Fox and corresponded with Barton on the subject. He did not write the book.

Barton had a plan to provide Wordsworth's Ecclesiastical Sonnets with a Quaker pendant. He did not carry it out.

Here might come an undated and unpublished letter from Lamb to Basil Montagu, which is of little interest except as referring to Miss James, Mary Lamb's nurse. Lamb says that she was one of four sisters, daughters of a Welsh clergyman, who all became nurses at Mrs. Warburton's, Hoxton, whither, I imagine, Mary Lamb had often retired. Mrs. Parsons, one of the sisters, became Mary Lamb's nurse when, some time after Lamb's death, she moved to 41 Alpha Road, Mrs. Parsons' house. The late John Hollingshead, great-nephew of these ladies, says in his interesting book, *My Lifetime*, that their father was rector of Beguildy, in Shropshire.]

LETTER 287

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

[January, 1823.]

DEAR Payne—Your little books are most acceptable. 'Tis a delicate edition. They are gone to the binder's. When they come home I shall have two—the "Camp" and "Patrick's Day"—to read for the first time. I may say three, for I never read the "School for Scandal." "*Seen* it I have, and in its happier days." With the books Harwood left a truncheon or mathematical instrument, of which we have not yet ascertained the use. It is like a telescope, but unglazed. Or a ruler, but not smooth enough. It opens like a fan, and discovers a frame such as they weave lace upon at Lyons and Chambery. Possibly it is from those parts. I do not value the present the less, for not being quite able to detect its purport. When I can find any one coming your way I have a volume for you, my Elias collected. Tell Poole, his Cockney in the Lon. Mag. tickled me exceedingly. Harwood is to be with us this evening with Fanny, who comes to introduce a literary lady, who wants to see me,—and whose portentous name is *Plura*, in English "many things." Now, of all God's creatures, I detest letters-affecting, authors-hunting ladies. But Fanny "will have it so." So Miss Many Things and I are to have a conference, of which you shall have the result. I dare say she does not play at whist. Treasurer Robertson, whose coffers are absolutely swelling with pantomimic receipts, called on me yesterday to say he is going to write to you, but if I were also, I might as well say that your last bill is at the Banker's, and will be honored on the instant receipt of the third Piece, which you have stipulated for. If you have any such in readiness, strike while the iron is hot, before the Clown cools. Tell Mrs. Kenney, that the Miss F. H. (or H. F.) Kelly, who has begun so splendidly in Juliet, is the identical little Fanny Kelly who used to play on their green before their great Lying-Inn Lodgings at Bayswater. Her career has stopt short by the injudicious bringing her out in a vile new Tragedy, and for a third character in a stupid old one,—the Earl of Essex. This is Macready's doing, who taught her. Her recitation, &c. (*not her voice or person*), is masculine. It is so clever, it seemed a male *Debut*. But cleverness is the bane of Female Tragedy especially. Passions uttered logically, &c. It is bad enough in men-actors. Could you do nothing for little Clara Fisher? Are there no French Pieces with a Child in them? By Pieces I mean here dramas, to

prevent male-constructions. Did not the Blue Girl remind you of some of Congreve's women? Angelica or Millamant? To me she was a vision of Genteel Comedy realized. Those kind of people never come to see one. *N'import*—havn't I Miss Many Things coming? Will you ask Horace Smith to——[*The remainder of this letter has been lost.*]

NOTE

[Payne seems to have sent Lamb an edition of Sheridan. "The Camp" and "St. Patrick's Day" are among his less known plays.

"*Seen* it I have, and in its happier days." After Pope's line (29) in the "Epilogue to the Satires I.":—

Seen him I have, but in his happier hour.

Poole was writing articles on France in the *London Magazine*. Lamb refers to "A Cockney's Rural Sports" in the number for December, 1822.

Fanny would be Fanny Holcroft. Plura I do not identify.

"Fanny 'will have it so.'" Possibly in recollection of "pretty Fanny's way" in Parnell's "Elegy to an Old Beauty."

The new tragedy in which Miss Kelly had to play was probably "The Huguenot," produced December 11, 1822. "The Earl of Essex" was revived December 30, 1822. Macready played in both.

"Cleverness is the bane." See Lamb's little article on "The New Acting" in Vol. I., page 151.

Clara Fisher. See Letter 292.

The Blue Girl seems to refer to the lady mentioned at the end of Letter 275.

Angelica is in Congreve's "Love for Love"; Millamant in his "Way of the World."]

LETTER 288

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

[No date. January, 1823.]

DEAR Wordsworth, I beg your acceptance of ELIA, detached from any of its old companions which might have been less agreeable to you. I hope your eyes are better, but if you must spare them, there is nothing in my pages which a Lady may not read aloud without indecorum, *which is more than can be said of Shakspeare.*

What a nut this last sentence would be for Blackwood!

You will find I availed myself of your suggestion, in curtailing the dissertation on Malvolio.

I have been on the Continent since I saw you.

I have eaten frogs.

I saw Monkhouse tother day, and Mrs. M. being too poorly to admit of company, the annual goosepye was sent to Russell Street, and with its capacity has fed "A hundred head" (not of Aristotle's) but "of Elia's friends."

Mrs. Monkhouse is sadly confined, but chearful.—

This packet is going off, and I have neither time, place nor solitude for a longer Letter.

Will you do me the favor to forward the other volume to Southey?

Mary is perfectly well, and joins me in kindest remembces to you all. [*Signature cut away.*]

NOTE

["What a nut . . . for Blackwood." To help on Maga's great cause against Cockney arrogance.

"The dissertation on Malvolio." In *Elia* the essays on the Old Actors were much changed and rearranged (see Appendix to Vol. II. in this edition).

"A hundred head." See the *Dunciad*, IV., 192:—

A hundred head of Aristotle's friends.]

LETTER 289

CHARLES LAMB TO MR. AND MRS. J. D. COLLIER

Twelfth Day [January 6], 1823.

THE pig was above my feeble praise. It was a dear pigmy. There was some contention as to who should have the ears, but in spite of his obstinacy (deaf as these little creatures are to advice) I contrived to get at one of them.

It came in boots too, which I took as a favor. Generally those petty toes, pretty toes! are missing. But I suppose he wore them, to look taller.

He must have been the least of his race. His little foots would have gone into the silver slipper. I take him to have been Chinese, and a female.—

If Evelyn could have seen him, he would never have farrowed two

such prodigious volumes, seeing how much good can be contained in—how small a compass!

He crackled delicately.

John Collier Junr has sent me a Poem which (without the smallest bias from the aforesaid present, believe me) I pronounce *sterling*.

I set about Evelyn, and finished the first volume in the course of a natural day. To-day I attack the second.—Parts are very interesting.—

I left a blank at top of my letter, not being determined *which* to address it to, so Farmer and Farmer's wife will please to divide our thanks. May your granaries be full, and your rats empty, and your chickens plump, and your envious neighbors lean, and your labourers busy, and you as idle and as happy as the day is long!

VIVE L' AGRICULTURE!

Frank Field's marriage of course you have seen in the papers, and that his brother Barron is expected home.

How do you make your pigs so little?
They are vastly engaging at that age.
I was so myself.
Now I am a disagreeable old hog—
A middle-aged-gentleman-and-a-half.

My faculties, thank God, are not much impaired. I have my sight, hearing, taste, pretty perfect; and can read the Lord's Prayer in the common type, by the help of a candle, without making many mistakes.

Believe me, while my faculties last, a proper appreciator of your many kindnesses in this way; and that the last lingering relish of past flavors upon my dying memory will be the smack of that little Ear. It was the left ear, which is lucky. Many happy returns (not of the Pig) but of the New Year to both.—

Mary for her share of the Pig and the memoirs desires to send the same—

Dr. Mr. C. and Mrs. C.—

Yours truly

C. LAMB.

NOTE

[This letter, now printed from the original in the possession of Mr. Adam of Buffalo, is usually supposed to have been addressed by Lamb to Mr. and Mrs. Bruton of Mackery End. The address is, however, Mrs. Collier, Smallfield Place, East Grinstead, Sussex (see also Letters 266 and 336, pages 561 and 655).

"If Evelyn could have seen him." John Evelyn's *Diary* had recently been published, in 1818 and 1819, in two large quarto volumes.]

LETTER 290

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

9 Jan., 1823.

"THROW yourself on the world without any rational plan of support, beyond what the chance employ of Booksellers would afford you"!!!

Throw yourself rather, my dear Sir, from the steep Tarpeian rock, slap-dash headlong upon iron spikes. If you had but five consolatory minutes between the desk and the bed, make much of them, and live a century in them, rather than turn slave to the Booksellers. They are Turks and Tartars, when they have poor Authors at their beck. Hitherto you have been at arm's length from them. Come not within their grasp. I have known many authors for bread, some repining, others envying the blessed security of a Counting House, all agreeing they had rather have been Taylors, Weavers, what not? rather than the things they were. I have known some starved, some to go mad, one dear friend literally dying in a workhouse. You know not what a rapacious, dishonest set those booksellers are. Ask even Southey, who (a single case almost) has made a fortune by book drudgery, what he has found them. O you know not, may you never know! the miseries of subsisting by authorship. 'Tis a pretty appendage to a situation like yours or mine, but a slavery worse than all slavery to be a bookseller's dependent, to drudge your brains for pots of ale and breasts of mutton, to change your free thoughts and voluntary numbers for ungracious TASK-WORK. Those fellows hate *us*. The reason I take to be, that, contrary to other trades, in which the Master gets all the credit (a Jeweller or Silversmith for instance), and the Journeyman, who really does the fine work, is in the background, in *our* work the world gives all the credit to Us, whom *they* consider as *their* Journeymen, and therefore do they hate us, and cheat us, and oppress us, and would wring the blood of us out, to put another sixpence in their mechanic pouches. I contend, that a Bookseller has a *relative honesty* towards Authors, not like his honesty to the rest of the world. B[aldwin], who first engag'd me as Elia, has not paid me up yet (nor any of us without repeated mortifying applials), yet how the Knave fawned

while I was of service to him! Yet I dare say the fellow is punctual in settling his milk-score, &c. Keep to your Bank, and the Bank will keep you. Trust not to the Public, you may hang, starve, drown yourself, for anything that worthy *Personage* cares. I bless every star that Providence, not seeing good to make me independent, has seen it next good to settle me upon the stable foundation of Leadenhall. Sit down, good B. B., in the Banking Office; what, is there not from six to Eleven P.M. 6 days in the week, and is there not all Sunday? Fie, what a superfluity of man's time,—if you could think so! Enough for relaxation, mirth, converse, poetry, good thoughts, quiet thoughts. O the corroding torturing tormenting thoughts, that disturb the Brain of the unlucky wight, who must draw upon it for daily sustenance. Henceforth I retract all my fond complaints of mercantile employment, look upon them as Lovers' quarrels. I was but half in earnest. Welcome, dead timber of a desk, that makes me live. A little grumbling is a wholesome medicine for the spleen; but in my inner heart do I approve and embrace this our close but unharassing way of life. I am quite serious. If you can send me Fox, I will not keep it six *weeks*, and will return it, with warm thanks to yourself and friend, without blot or dog's ear. You much oblige me by this kindness.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

Please to direct to me at India Ho. in future. [? I am] not always at Russell St.

NOTE

[Barton had long been meditating the advisability of giving up his place in the bank at Woodbridge and depending upon his pen. Lamb's letter of dissuasion is not the only one which he received. Byron had written to him in 1812: "You deserve success; but we knew, before Addison wrote his Cato, that desert does not always command it. But suppose it attained—

> 'You know what ills the author's life assail—
> Toil, envy, want, the *patron*, and the jail.'

Do not renounce writing, but never trust entirely to authorship. If you have a profession, retain it; it will be like Prior's fellowship, a last and sure resource." Barton had now broken again into dissatisfaction with his life. He did not, however, leave the bank.

Southey made no "fortune" by his pen. He almost always had to forestall his new works.]

LETTERS 291 AND 292

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

23 January, '23.

DEAR Payne—I have no mornings (my day begins at 5 P.M.) to transact business in, or talents for it, so I employ Mary, who has seen Robertson, who says that the Piece which is to be Operafied was sent to you six weeks since by a Mr. Hunter, whose journey has been delayed, but he supposes you have it by this time. On receiving it back properly done, the rest of your dues will be forthcoming. You have received £30 from Harwood, I hope? Bishop was at the theatre when Mary called, and he has put your other piece into C. Kemble's hands (the piece you talk of offering Elliston) and C. K. sent down word that he had not yet had time to read it. So stand your affairs at present. Glossop has got the Murderer. Will you address him on the subject, or shall I—that is, Mary? She says you must write more *showable* letters about these matters, for, with all our trouble of crossing out this word, and giving a cleaner turn to th' other, and folding down at this part, and squeezing an obnoxious epithet into a corner, she can hardly communicate their contents without offence. What, man, put less gall in your ink, or write me a biting tragedy!

C. LAMB.

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

February [9], 1823.

MY dear Miss Lamb—I have enclosed for you Mr. Payne's piece called Grandpapa, which I regret to say is not thought to be of the nature that will suit this theatre; but as there appears to be much merit in it, Mr. Kemble strongly recommends that you should send it to the English Opera House, for which it seems to be excellently adapted. As you have already been kind enough to be our medium of communication with Mr. Payne, I have imposed this trouble upon you; but if you do not like to act for Mr. Payne in the business, and have no means of disposing of the piece, I will forward it to Paris or elsewhere as you think he may prefer.

Very truly yours, HENRY ROBERTSON.

T. R. C. G., 8 Feb. 1823.

DEAR P—— We have just received the above, and want your instructions. It strikes me as a very merry little piece, that should be played by *very young actors*. It strikes me that Miss Clara Fisher would play the *boy* exactly. She is just such a forward chit. No young *man* would do it without its appearing absurd, but in a girl's hands it would have just all the reality that a short dream of an act requires. Then for the sister, if Miss Stevenson that was, were Miss Stevenson and younger, they two would carry it off. I do not know who they have got in that young line, besides Miss C. F., at Drury, nor how you would like Elliston to have it—has he not had it? I am thick with Arnold, but I have always heard that the very slender profits of the English Opera House do not admit of his giving above a trifle, or next to none, for a piece of this kind. Write me what I should do, what you would ask, &c. The music (printed) is returned with the piece, and the French original. Tell Mr. Grattan I thank him for his book, which as far as I have read it is a very *companionable one*. I have but just received it. It came the same hour with your packet from Cov. Gar., *i.e.* yester-night late, to my summer residence, where, tell Kenney, the cow is quiet. Love to all at Versailles. Write quickly. C. L.

I have no acquaintance with Kemble at all, having only met him once or twice; but any information, &c., I can get from R., who is a good fellow, you may command. I am sorry the rogues are so dilitory, but I distinctly believe they mean to fulfill their engagement. I am sorry you are not here to see to these things. I am a poor man of business, but command me to the short extent of my tether. My sister's kind remembrance ever. C. L.

NOTE

[The "Grandpapa" was eventually produced at Drury Lane, May 25, 1825, and played thrice. Miss Stevenson was an actress praised by Lamb in *The Examiner* (see Vol. I. of this edition, pages 187 and 189).

Samuel James Arnold was manager of the Lyceum, then known as the English Opera House; he was the brother of Mrs. William Ayrton, Lamb's friend.

Mr. Grattan was Thomas Colley Grattan (1792-1864), who was then living in Paris. His book would be *Highways and Byways*, first series, 1823.

There is one other note to Payne in the *Century Magazine*, unimportant and undated, suggesting a walk one Sunday.]

LETTER 293

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. February 17, 1823.]

MY dear Sir—I have read quite through the ponderous folio of G. F. I think Sewell has been judicious in omitting certain parts, as for instance where G. F. *has* revealed to him the natures of all the creatures in their names, as Adam had. He luckily turns aside from that compendious study of natural history, which might have superseded Buffon, to his proper spiritual pursuits, only just hinting what a philosopher he might have been. The ominous passage is near the beginning of the Book. It is clear he means a physical knowledge, without trope or figure. Also, pretences to miraculous healing and the like are more frequent than I should have suspected from the epitome in Sewell. He is nevertheless a great spiritual man, and I feel very much obliged by your procuring me the Loan of it. How I like the Quaker phrases—though I think they were hardly completed till Woolman. A pretty little manual of Quaker language (with an endeavour to explain them) might be gathered out of his Book. Could not you do it? I have read through G. F. without finding any explanation of the term *first volume* in the title page. It takes in all, both his life and his death. Are there more Last words of him? Pray, how may I venture to return it to Mr. Shewell at Ipswich? I fear to send such a Treasure by a Stage Coach. Not that I am afraid of the Coachman or the Guard *reading it*. But it might be lost. Can you put me in a way of sending it in safety? The kind hearted owner trusted it to me for six months. I think I was about as many days in getting through it, and I do not think that I skipt a word of it. I have quoted G. F. in my Quaker's meeting, as having said he was "lifted up in spirit" (which I felt at the time to be not a Quaker phrase), "and the Judge and Jury were as dead men under his feet." I find no such words in his Journal, and I did not get them from Sewell, and the latter sentence I am sure I did not mean to invent. I must have put some other Quaker's words into his mouth. Is it a fatality in me, that every thing I touch turns into a Lye? I once quoted two Lines from a translation of Dante, which Hazlitt very greatly admired, and quoted in a Book as proof of the stupendous power of that poet, but no such lines are to be found in the translation, which has been searched for the purpose. I must have dreamed them, for I am quite certain I did not forge them knowingly. What a misfortune to have a Lying

memory.—Yes, I have seen Miss Coleridge, and wish I had just such a—daughter. God love her—to think that she should have had to toil thro' five octavos of that cursed (I forget I write to a Quaker) Abbeypony History, and then to abridge them to 3, and all for £113. At her years, to be doing stupid Jesuits' Latin into English, when she should be reading or writing Romances. Heaven send her Uncle do not breed her up a Quarterly Reviewer!—which reminds me, that he has spoken very respectfully of you in the last number, which is the next thing to having a Review all to one's self. Your description of Mr. Mitford's place makes me long for a pippin and some carraways and a cup of sack in his orchard, when the sweets of the night come in.

Farewell. C. Lamb.

NOTE

[In the 1694 folio of George Fox's *Journal* the revelation of the names of creatures occurs twice, once under Notts in 1647 and again under Mansfield in 1648.

"Sewell." *The History of the Rise, Increase and Progress of the Christian People called Quakers*, 1722. By William Sewell (1654-1720).

"In my Quaker's meeting"—the *Elia* essay (see Vol. II., page 45).

"I once quoted two Lines." Possibly, Mr. A. R. Waller suggests to me, the lines:—

> Because on earth their names
> In Fame's eternal volume shine for aye,

quoted by Hazlitt in his *Round Table* essay "On Posthumous Fame," and again in one of his *Edinburgh Review* articles. They are presumably based upon the *Inferno*, Canto IV. (see Haselfoot's translation, second edition, 1899, page 21, lines 74-78). But the "manufacturer" of them must have had Spenser's line in his mind, "On Fame's eternall bead-roll worthie to be fyled" (*Fœrie Queene*, Bk. IV., Canto II., Stanza 32). They have not yet been found in any translation of Dante. This explanation would satisfy Lamb's words "quoted in a book," *i.e.*, *The Round Table*, published in 1817.

"Miss Coleridge"—Coleridge's daughter Sara, born in 1802, who had been brought up by her uncle, Southey. She had translated Martin Dobrizhoffer's Latin history of the Abipones in order to gain funds for her brother Derwent's college expenses. Her father considered the translation "unsurpassed for pure mother English by anything I have read for a long time." Sara Coleridge married her cousin, Henry Nelson Coleridge, in 1829. She edited her father's

works and died in 1852. At the present time she and her mother were visiting the Gillmans.

Mr. Mitford was John Mitford (1781-1859), rector of Benhall, in Suffolk, and editor of old poets. Later he became editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. He was a cousin of Mary Russell Mitford. In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for May, 1838, is a review of Talfourd's edition of Lamb's *Letters*, probably from his pen, in which he records a visit to the Lambs in 1827.]

LETTER 294

CHARLES LAMB TO WALTER WILSON

[Dated at end: February 24, 1823.]

DEAR W.—I write that you may not think me neglectful, not that I have any thing to say. In answer to your questions, it was at *your* house I saw an edition of Roxana, the preface to which stated that the author had left out that part of it which related to Roxana's daughter persisting in imagining herself to be so, in spite of the mother's denial, from certain hints she had picked up, and throwing herself continually in her mother's way (as Savage is said to have done in *his*, prying in at windows to get a glimpse of her), and that it was by advice of Southern, who objected to the circumstances as being untrue, when the rest of the story was founded on fact; which shows S. to have been a stupid-ish fellow. The incidents so resemble Savage's story, that I taxed Godwin with taking Falconer from his life by Dr. Johnson. You should have the edition (if you have not parted with it), for I saw it never but at your place at the Mews' Gate, nor did I then read it to compare it with my own; only I know the daughter's curiosity is the best part of *my* Roxana. The prologue you speak of was mine, so named, but not worth much. You ask me for 2 or 3 pages of verse. I have not written so much since you knew me. I am altogether prosaic. May be I may touch off a sonnet in time. I do not prefer Col. Jack to either Rob. Cr. or Roxana. I only spoke of the beginning of it, his childish history. The rest is poor. I do not know anywhere any good character of De Foe besides what you mention. I do not know that Swift mentions him. Pope does. I forget if D'Israeli has. Dunlop I think has nothing of him. He is quite new ground, and scarce known beyond Crusoe. I do not know who wrote Quarll. I never thought of Quarll as having an author. It is a poor imitation; the monkey is the best in it, and his pretty dishes made of shells. Do you know the

Paper in the Englishman by Sir Rd. Steele, giving an account of Selkirk? It is admirable, and has all the germs of Crusoe. You must quote it entire. Captain G. Carleton wrote his own Memoirs; they are about Lord Peterborough's campaign in Spain, & a good Book. Puzzelli puzzles me, and I am in a cloud about Donald M'Leod. I never heard of them; so you see, my dear Wilson, what poor assistances I can give in the way of information. I wish your Book out, for I shall like to see any thing about De Foe or from you.

Your old friend, C. LAMB.

From my and your old compound. 24 Feb. '23.

NOTE

[With this letter compare Letter 89 to Godwin, and Letter 285 to Wilson, pages 225 and 586.

Defoe's *Roxana*, first edition, does not, as a matter of fact, contain the episode of the daughter which Lamb so much admired. Later editions have it. Godwin says in his Preface to "Faulkener," 1807, the play to which Lamb wrote a prologue in praise of Defoe (see Vol. V., page 123), that the only accessible edition of *Roxana* in which the story of Susannah is fully told is that of 1745.

Richard Savage was considered to be the natural son of the Countess of Macclesfield and Earl Rivers. His mother at first disowned him, but afterwards, when this became impossible, repulsed him. Johnson says in his "Life of Savage," that it was his hero's "practice to walk in the dark evenings for several hours before her door in hopes of seeing her as she might come by accident to the window or cross her apartment with a candle in her hand."

Swift and Defoe were steady enemies, although I do not find that either mentions the other by name. But Swift in *The Examiner* often had Defoe in mind, and Defoe in one of his political writings refers to Swift, *apropos* Wood's halfpence, as "the copper farthing author."

Pope referred to Defoe twice in the *Dunciad:* once as standing high, fearless and unabashed in the pillory, and once, libellously, as the father of Norton, of the *Flying Post*.

Philip Quarll was the first imitation of *Robinson Crusoe*. It was published in 1727, purporting to be the narrative of one Dorrington, a merchant, and Quarll's discoverer. The title begins, *The Hermit; or, The Unparalleled Sufferings and Surprising Adventures of Mr. Philip Quarll, an Englishman* . . . Lamb says in his essay on Christ's Hospital that the Blue-Coat boys used to read the book. It is unknown now, although an abridgment

appeared quite recently. The authorship of the book is still unknown.

Steele's account of Selkirk is in *The Englishman*, No. 26, Dec. 1, 1713. Wilson quoted it.

Defoe's fictitious *Military Memoirs of Capt. George Carleton* was published in 1728.

I cannot explain Puzzelli or Donald M'Leod. Later Lamb sent Wilson, who seems to have asked for some verse about Defoe, the "Ode to the Treadmill," but Wilson did not use it.

"My old compound." Robinson's *Diary* (Vol. I., page 333) has this: "The large room in the accountant's office at the East India House is divided into boxes or compartments, in each of which sit six clerks, Charles Lamb himself in one. They are called Compounds. The meaning of the word was asked one day, and Lamb said it was 'a collection of simples.'"]

LETTER 295

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[Dated at end: March 11, 1823.]

DEAR Sir—The approbation of my little book by your sister is very pleasing to me. The Quaker incident did not happen to me, but to Carlisle the surgeon, from whose mouth I have twice heard it, at an interval of ten or twelve years, with little or no variation, and have given it as exactly as I could remember it. The gloss which your sister, or you, have put upon it does not strike me as correct. Carlisle drew no inference from it against the honesty of the Quakers, but only in favour of their surprising coolness—that they should be capable of committing a good joke, with an utter insensibility to its being any jest at all. I have reason to believe in the truth of it, because, as I have said, I heard him repeat it without variation at such an interval. The story loses sadly in print, for Carlisle is the best story teller I ever heard. The idea of the discovery of roasting pigs, I also borrowed, from my friend Manning, and am willing to confess both my plagiarisms.

Should fate ever so order it that you shall be in town with your sister, mine bids me say that she shall have great pleasure in being introduced to her. I think I must give up the cause of the Bank—from nine to nine is galley-slavery, but I hope it is but temporary. Your endeavour at explaining Fox's insight into the natures of animals must fail, as I shall transcribe the passage. It appears to me that he stopt short in time, and was on the brink of falling

with his friend Naylor, my favourite.—The book shall be forthcoming whenever your friend can make convenient to call for it.

They have dragged me again into the Magazine, but I feel the spirit of the thing in my own mind quite gone. "Some brains" (I think Ben Jonson says it) "will endure but one skimming." We are about to have an inundation of poetry from the Lakes, Wordsworth and Southey are coming up strong from the North. The she Coleridges have taken flight, to my regret. With Sara's own-made acquisitions, her unaffectedness and no-pretensions are beautiful. You might pass an age with her without suspecting that she knew any thing but her mother's tongue. I don't mean any reflection on Mrs. Coleridge here. I had better have said her vernacular idiom. Poor C. I wish he had a home to receive his daughter in. But he is but as a stranger or a visitor in this world. How did you like Hartley's sonnets? The first, at least, is vastly fine. Lloyd has been in town a day or two on business, and is perfectly well. I am ashamed of the shabby letters I send, but I am by nature anything but neat. Therein my mother bore me no Quaker. I never could seal a letter without dropping the wax on one side, besides scalding my fingers. I never had a seal too of my own. Writing to a great man lately, who is moreover very Heraldic, I borrowed a seal of a friend, who by the female side quarters the Protectorial Arms of Cromwell. How they must have puzzled my correspondent!—My letters are generally charged as double at the Post office, from their inveterate clumsiness of foldure. So you must not take it disrespectful to your self if I send you such ungainly scraps. I think I lose £100 a year at the India House, owing solely to my want of neatness in making up Accounts. How I puzzle 'em out at last is the wonder. I have to do with millions. *I?*

It is time to have done my incoherencies.

Believe me Yours Truly C. Lamb.

Tuesd 11 Ma 23.

Note

[Lamb had sent *Elia* to Woodbridge. Bernard Barton's sister was Maria Hack, author of many books for children. The Quaker incident is in the essay "Imperfect Sympathies." Carlisle was Sir Anthony Carlisle, whom we have already seen.

"Your endeavour at explaining Fox's insight." See Letter 293. James Nayler (1617?-1660), an early Quaker who permitted his admirers to look upon him as a new Christ. He went to extremes totally foreign to the spirit of the Society. Barton made a paraphrase of Nayler's "Last Testimony."

"They have dragged me again." Lamb had been quite ready to give up *Elia* with the first essays. "Old China," one of his most charming papers, was in the March *London Magazine*.

"Some brains . . ." I have not been able to find this in Ben Jonson.

"Hartley's sonnets." Four sonnets by Hartley Coleridge were printed in the *London Magazine* for February, 1823, addressed to R. S. Jameson. This was the first :—

When we were idlers with the loitering rills,
  The need of human love we little noted :
  Our love was Nature ; and the peace that floated
On the white mist, and slept upon the hills,
To sweet accord subdued our wayward wills :
  One soul was ours, one mind, one heart devoted,
  That, wisely doating, ask'd not why it doated ;
And ours the unknown joy, that knowing kills.
But now I find how dear thou wert to me ;
  That, man is more than half of Nature's treasure,—
Of that fair beauty which no eye can see,—
  Of that still music which no ear can measure ;
But now the streams may sing for others' pleasure,
  The hills sleep on in their eternity.

"Writing to a great man lately." This was Sir Walter Scott (see Letter 279). Barron Field would be the friend with the seal.]

LETTER 296

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. 5 April 1823.]

DEAR Sir—You must think me ill mannered not to have replied to your first letter sooner, but I have an ugly habit of aversion from letter writing, which makes me an unworthy correspondent. I have had no spring, or cordial call to the occupation of late. I have been not well lately, which must be my lame excuse. Your poem, which I consider very affecting, found me engaged about a humorous Paper for the London, which I had called a "Letter to an *Old Gentleman* whose Education had been neglected"—and when it was done Taylor and Hessey would not print it, and it discouraged me from doing any thing else, so I took up Scott, where I had scribbled some petulant remarks, and for a make shift father'd them on Ritson. It is obvious I could not make your Poem a part of them, and as I did not know whether I should ever be able to do to my mind what you suggested, I thought it not fair to keep back the verses for the chance. Mr. Mitford's

sonnet I like very well; but as I also have my reasons against interfering at all with the Editorial arrangement of the London, I transmitted it (not in my own handwriting) to them, who I doubt not will be glad to insert it. What eventual benefit it can be to you (otherwise than that a kind man's wish is a benefit) I cannot conjecture. Your Society are eminently men of Business, and will probably regard you as an idle fellow, possibly disown you, that is to say, if you had put your own name to a sonnet of that sort, but they cannot excommunicate Mr. Mitford, therefore I thoroughly approve of printing the said verses. When I see any Quaker names to the Concert of Antient Music, or as Directors of the British Institution, or bequeathing medals to Oxford for the best classical themes, etc.—then I shall begin to hope they will emancipate you. But what as a Society can they do for you? you would not accept a Commission in the Army, nor they be likely to procure it; Posts in Church or State have they none in their giving; and then if they disown you—think—you must live "a man forbid."

I wishd for you yesterday. I dined in Parnassus, with Wordsworth, Coleridge, Rogers, and Tom Moore—half the Poetry of England constellated and clustered in Gloster Place! It was a delightful Even! Coleridge was in his finest vein of talk, had all the talk, and let 'em talk as evilly as they do of the envy of Poets, I am sure not one there but was content to be nothing but a listener. The Muses were dumb, while Apollo lectured on his and their fine Art. It is a lie that Poets are envious, I have known the best of them, and can speak to it, that they give each other their merits, and are the kindest critics as well as best authors. I am scribbling a muddy epistle with an aking head, for we did not quaff Hippocrene last night. Marry, it was Hippocras rather. Pray accept this as a letter in the mean time, and do me the favor to mention my respects to Mr. Mitford, who is so good as to entertain good thoughts of Elia, but don't show this almost impertinent scrawl. I will write more respectfully next time, for believe me, if not in words, in feelings, yours most so.

Note

["Your poem." Barton's poem was entitled "A Poet's Thanks," and was printed in the *London Magazine* for April, 1823, the same number that contained Lamb's article on Ritson and Scott. It is one of his best poems, an expression of contentment in simplicity. The "Letter to an Old Gentleman," a parody of De Quincey's series of "Letters to a Young Gentleman" in the *London Magazine*, was not published until January, 1825. Scott was John Scott of Amwell (Barton's predecessor as the Quaker poet), who had written

a rather foolish book of prose, *Critical Essays on the English Poets*. Ritson was Joseph Ritson, the critic and antiquarian. See Vol. I. of the present edition, page 218, for the essay. Barton seems to have suggested to Lamb that he should write an essay around the poem "A Poet's Thanks." Mitford's sonnet, which was printed in the *London Magazine* for June, 1823, was addressed commiseratingly to Bernard Barton. It began:—

> What to thy broken Spirit can atone,
> Unhappy victim of the Tyrant's fears;

and continued in the same strain, the point being that Barton was the victim of his Quaker employers, who made him "prisoner at once and slave." Lamb's previous letter shows us that Barton was being worked from nine till nine, and we must suppose also that an objection to his poetical exercises had been lodged or suggested. The matter righted itself in time.

"A man forbid" ("Macbeth," I., 3, 21).

"I dined in Parnassus." This dinner, at Thomas Monkhouse's, No. 34 Gloucester Place, is described both by Moore and by Crabb Robinson, who was present. Moore wrote in his *Journal*: "Dined at Mr. Monkhouse's (a gentleman I had never seen before) on Wordsworth's invitation, who lives there whenever he comes to town. A singular party. Coleridge, Rogers, Wordsworth and wife, Charles Lamb (the hero at present of the *London Magazine*), and his sister (the poor woman who went mad in a diligence on the way to Paris), and a Mr. Robinson, one of the *minora sidera* of this constellation of the Lakes; the host himself, a Mæcenas of the school, contributing nothing but good dinners and silence. Charles Lamb, a clever fellow, certainly, but full of villainous and abortive puns, which he miscarries of every minute. Some excellent things, however, have come from him."

Lamb told Moore that he had hitherto always felt an antipathy to him, but henceforward should like him.

Crabb Robinson writes: "*April 4th.*—Dined at Monkhouse's. Our party consisted of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Lamb, Moore, and Rogers. Five poets of very unequal worth and most disproportionate popularity, whom the public probably would arrange in the very inverse order, except that it would place Moore above Rogers. During this afternoon, Coleridge alone displayed any of his peculiar talent. He talked much and well. I have not for years seen him in such excellent health and spirits. His subjects metaphysical criticism—Wordsworth he chiefly talked to. Rogers occasionally let fall a remark. Moore seemed conscious of his inferiority. He was very attentive to Coleridge, but seemed to relish Lamb, whom he sat next. L. was in a good frame—kept

ALEXANDER POPE

FROM THE PAINTING BY M. DAHLL

himself within bounds and was only cheerful at last. . . . I was at the bottom of the table, where I very ill performed my part. . . . I walked home late with Lamb."

Many years later Robinson sent to *The Athenæum* (June 25, 1853) a further and fuller account of the evening.

"Hippocrene . . . Hippocras." Hippocrene is the fountain of the Muses; hippocras, a medicinal drink.]

LETTER 297

CHARLES LAMB TO B. W. PROCTER

April 13th, 1823.

DEAR Lad,—You must think me a brute beast, a rhinoceros, never to have acknowledged the receipt of your precious present. But indeed I am none of those shocking things, but have arrived at that indisposition to letter-writing, which would make it a hard exertion to write three lines to a king to spare a friend's life. Whether it is that the Magazine paying me so much a page, I am loath to throw away composition—how much a sheet do you give your correspondents? I have hung up Pope, and a gem it is, in my town room; I hope for your approval. Though it accompanies the "Essay on Man," I think that was not the poem he is here meditating. He would have looked up, somehow affectedly, if he were just conceiving "Awake, my St. John." Neither is he in the "Rape of the Lock" mood exactly. I think he has just made out the last lines of the "Epistle to Jervis," between gay and tender,

"And other beauties envy Worsley's eyes."

I'll be damn'd if that isn't the line. He is brooding over it, with a dreamy phantom of Lady Mary floating before him. He is thinking which is the earliest possible day and hour that she will first see it. What a miniature piece of gentility it is! Why did you give it me? I do not like you enough to give you anything so good.

I have dined with T. Moore and breakfasted with Rogers, since I saw you; have much to say about them when we meet, which I trust will be in a week or two. I have been over-watched and over-poeted since Wordsworth has been in town. I was obliged for health sake to wish him gone: but now he is gone I feel a great loss. I am going to Dalston to recruit, and have serious thoughts —of altering my condition, that is, of taking to sobriety. What do you advise me?

T. Moore asked me your address in a manner which made me believe he meant to call upon you.

Rogers spake very kindly of you, as every body does, and none with so much reason as your C. L.

NOTE

[This is the first important letter to Bryan Waller Procter, better known as Barry Cornwall, who was afterwards to write, in his old age, so pleasant a memoir of Lamb. He was then thirty-five, was practising law, and had already published *Marcian Colonna* and *A Sicilian Story*.

The Epistle to Mr. Jervas (with Mr. Dryden's translation of Fresnoy's *Art of Painting*) did not end upon this line, but some eighteen lines later. I give the portrait opposite page 606.

"Lady Mary." By Lady Mary Lamb means, as Pope did in the first edition, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. But after his quarrel with that lady Pope altered it to Worsley, signifying Lady Frances Worsley, daughter of the Duke of Marlborough and wife of Sir Robert Worsley.]

LETTER 298

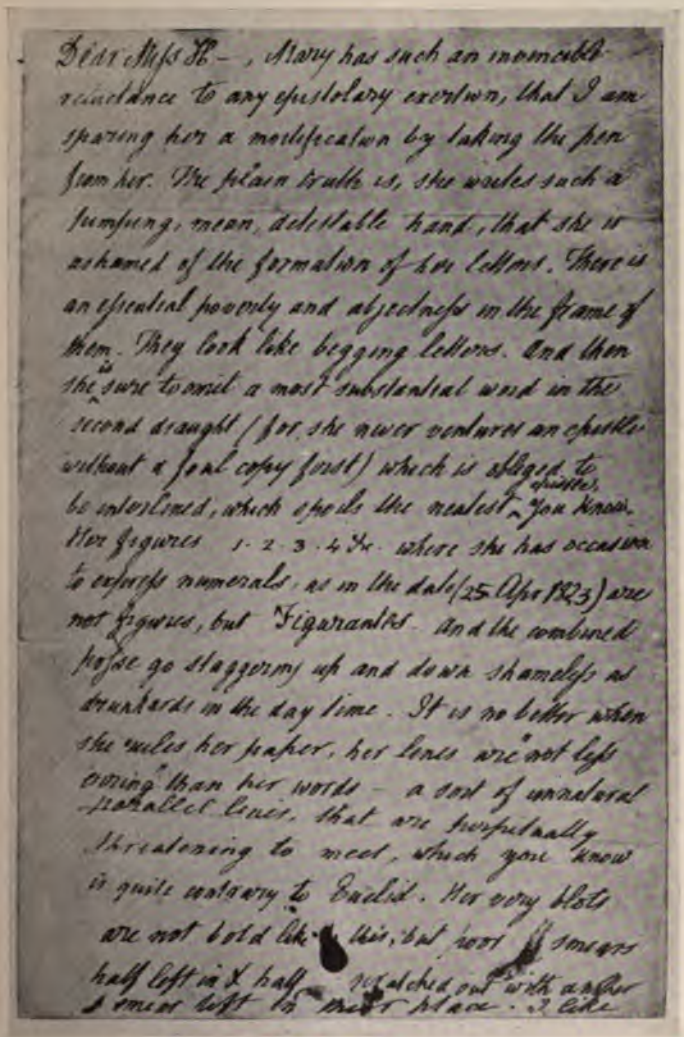
CHARLES LAMB TO SARAH HUTCHINSON

(*See Facsimile*)

[P.M. April 25, 1823.]

DEAR Miss H——, Mary has such an invincible reluctance to any epistolary exertion, that I am sparing her a mortification by taking the pen from her. The plain truth is, she writes such a pimping, mean, detestable hand, that she is ashamed of the formation of her letters. There is an essential poverty and abjectness in the frame of them. They look like begging letters. And then she is sure to omit a most substantial word in the second draught (for she never ventures an epistle without a foul copy first) which is obliged to be interlined, which spoils the neatest epistle, you know [*the word "epistle" is underlined*]. Her figures, 1, 2, 3, 4, &c., where she has occasion to express numerals, as in the date (25 Apr 1823), are not figures, but Figurantes. And the combined posse go staggering up and down shameless as drunkards in the day time. It is no better when she rules her paper, her lines are "not less erring" than her words—a sort of unnatural parallel lines, that are perpetually threatening to meet, which you know is quite contrary to Euclid [*here Lamb has ruled lines grossly unparallel*]. Her very blots are not bold like this [*here a bold blot*], but poor smears [*here a poor smear*] half left in and half scratched out with another smear left in their place. I like a clean letter. A bold free hand, and a

inter/



Dear Miss H—, Mary has such an invincible reluctance to any epistolary exertion, that I am sparing her a mortification by taking the pen from her. The plain truth is, she writes such a lumping, mean, detestable hand, that she is ashamed of the formation of her letters. There is an essential poverty and abjectness in the frame of them. They look like begging letters. And then she sure to avoid a most substantial word in the second draught (for she never ventures on a letter without a foul copy first) which is alleged to be underlined, which spoils the neatness of the printer. You know. Her figures 1. 2. 3. 4 &c. where she has occasion to express numerals, as in the date (25 Apr 1823) are not figures, but Figaranties. And the combined forces go staggering up and down shamefully as drunkards in the day time. It is no better when she rules her paper, her lines are not less erring than her words — a sort of unnatural parallel lines, that are perpetually threatening to meet, which you know is quite contrary to Euclid. Her very blots are not bold like this, but poor [illegible] smears half left in & half scratched out with another smear left in their place. I like

REDUCED FACSIMILE OF LETTER FROM LAMB TO SARAH HUTCHINSON

FROM THE ORIGINAL IN THE POSSESSION OF MR. GORDON WORDSWORTH

fearless flourish. Then she has always to go thro' them (a second operation) to dot her is, and cross her ts. I don't think she can make a cork screw, if she tried—which has such a fine effect at the end or middle of an epistle—and fills up—

[*Here Lamb has made a corkscrew two inches long* (*see facsimile*).]

There is a corkscrew, one of the best I ever drew. By the way what incomparable whiskey that was of Monkhouse's. But if I am to write a letter, let me begin, and not stand flourishing like a fencer at a fair.

It gives me great pleasure (the letter now begins) to hear that you got down smoothly, and that Mrs. Monkhouse's spirits are so good and enterprising. It shews, whatever her posture may be, that her mind at least is not supine. I hope the excursion will enable the former to keep pace with its out-stripping neighbor. Pray present our kindest wishes to her, and all. (That sentence should properly have come in the Post Script, but we airy Mercurial Spirits, there is no keeping us in). Time—as was said of one of us—toils after us in vain. I am afraid our co-visit with Coleridge was a dream. I shall not get away before the end (or middle) of June, and then you will be frog-hopping at Boulogne. And besides I think the Gilmans would scarce trust him with us, I have a malicious knack at cutting of apron strings. The Saints' days you speak of have long since fled to heaven, with Astræa, and the cold piety of the age lacks fervor to recall them—only Peter left his key —the iron one of the two, that shuts amain—and that's the reason I am lockd up. Meanwhile of afternoons we pick up primroses at Dalston, and Mary corrects me when I call 'em cowslips. God bless you all, and pray remember me euphoneously to Mr. Gnwellegan. That Lee Priory must be a dainty bower, is it built of flints, and does it stand at Kingsgate? Did you remem

[*This is apparently the proper end of the letter. At least there is no indication of another sheet.*]

NOTE

[Addressed to "Miss Hutchinson, 17 Sion Hill, Ramsgate, Kent," where she was staying with Mrs. Monkhouse.

"Not less erring." I have not found this.

"'Time'—as was said of one of us." Johnson wrote of Shakespeare, in the Prologue at the opening of Drury Lane Theatre in 1747:—

And panting Time toil'd after him in vain.

"The Saints' days." See note on page 514. Astræa, goddess of justice, fled to heaven in the age of bronze owing to the wickedness of man.

"Shuts amain."

> Two mass keys he bore, of metals twain,
> (The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).
>
> *Lycidas*, 110, 111.

"Mr. Gnwellegan." Probably Lamb's effort to write the name of Edward Quillinan, afterwards Wordsworth's son-in-law, whose first wife had been a Miss Brydges of Lee Priory.

"Lee Priory"—the home of Sir Egerton Brydges, at Ickham, near Canterbury, for some years. He had, however, now left, and the private press was closed.

In *Notes and Queries*, November 11, 1876, was printed the following scrap, a postscript by Charles Lamb to a letter from Mary Lamb to Miss H(utchinson). I place it here, having no clue as to date, nor does it matter:—]

LETTER 299

(*Fragment*)

CHARLES LAMB TO MISS HUTCHINSON (?)

[No date.]

APROPOS of birds—the other day at a large dinner, being call'd upon for a toast, I gave, as the best toast I knew, "Wood-cock toast," which was drunk with 3 cheers.

Yours affect^y^

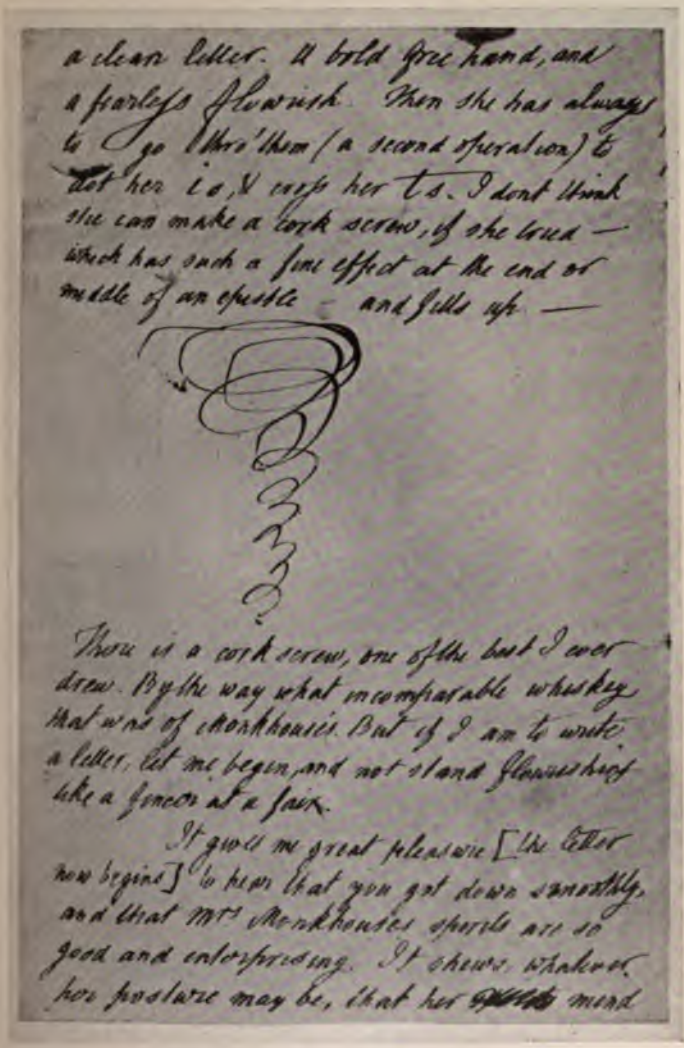
C. LAMB.

LETTER 300

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN BATES DIBDIN

[No date. Probably 1823.]

IT is hard when a Gentleman cannot remain concealed, who affecteth obscurity with greater avidity than most do seek to have their good deeds brought to light—to have a prying inquisitive finger, (to the danger of its own scorching), busied in removing the little peck measure (scripturally a bushel) under which one had hoped to bury his small candle. The receipt of fern-seed, I think, in this curious age, would scarce help a man to walk invisible.



a clear letter. It bold free hand, and a fearless flourish. Then she has always to go thro' them (a second operation) to dot her i's, & cross her t's. I dont think she can make a cork screw, if she tried — which has such a fine effect at the end or middle of an epistle — and fills up —

There is a cork screw, one of the best I ever drew. By the way what incomparable whiskey that was at Monkhouses. But if I am to write a letter, let me begin, and not stand flourishing like a fencer at a fair.

It gives me great pleasure [the letter now begins] to hear that you get down smoothly, and that Mrs Monkhouses spirits are so good and enterprising. It shews, whatever her posture may be, that her mind

REDUCED FACSIMILE OF LETTER FROM LAMB TO SARAH HUTCHINSON *(CONTINUED)*

FROM THE ORIGINAL IN THE POSSESSION OF MR. GORDON WORDSWORTH

Well, I am discovered—and thou thyself, who thoughtest to shelter under the pease-cod of initiality (a stale and shallow device), art no less dragged to light—Thy slender anatomy—thy skeletonian D—— fleshed and sinewed out to the plump expansion of six characters—thy tuneful genealogy deduced—

By the way, what a name is Timothy!

Lay it down, I beseech thee, and in its place take up the properer sound of Timotheus—

Then mayst thou with unblushing fingers handle the Lyre "familiar to the D——n name."

With much difficulty have I traced thee to thy lurking-place. Many a goodly name did I run over, bewildered between Dorrien, and Doxat, and Dover, and Dakin, and Daintry—a wilderness of D's—till at last I thought I had hit it—my conjectures wandering upon a melancholy Jew—you wot the Israelite upon Change—Master Daniels—a contemplative Hebrew—to the which guess I was the rather led, by the consideration that most of his nation are great readers—

Nothing is so common as to see them in the Jews' Walk, with a bundle of script in one hand, and the Man of Feeling, or a volume of Sterne, in the other—

I am a rogue if I can collect what manner of face thou carriest, though thou seemest so familiar with mine—If I remember, thou didst not dimly resemble the man Daniels, whom at first I took thee for—a care-worn, mortified, economical, commercio-political countenance, with an agreeable limp in thy gait, if Elia mistake thee not. I think I sh^d^. shake hands with thee, if I met thee.

NOTE

[John Bates Dibdin, the son of Charles Dibdin the younger and grandson of the great Charles Dibdin, was at this time a young man of about twenty-four, engaged as a clerk in a shipping office in the city. I borrow from Canon Ainger an interesting letter from a sister of Dibdin on the beginning of the correspondence :—

My brother . . . had constant occasion to conduct the giving or taking of cheques, as it might be, at the India House. There he always selected "the little clever man" in preference to the other clerks. At that time the *Elia Essays* were appearing in print. No one had the slightest conception who "Elia" was. He was talked of everywhere, and everybody was trying to find him out, but without success. At last, from the style and manner of conveying his ideas and opinions on different subjects, my brother began to suspect that Lamb was the individual so widely sought for, and wrote some lines to him, anonymously, sending them by post to his residence, with the hope of sifting him on the subject. Although Lamb could not *know* who sent him the lines, yet he looked very hard at the writer of them the next time they met, when he walked up, as usual, to Lamb's desk in the most unconcerned manner, to transact the necessary business. Shortly after, when they

were again in conversation, something dropped from Lamb's lips which convinced his hearer, beyond a doubt, that his suspicions were correct. He therefore wrote some more lines (anonymously, as before), beginning—

"I've found thee out, O Elia!"

and sent them to Colebrook Row. The consequence was that at their next meeting Lamb produced the lines, and after much laughing, confessed himself to be *Elia*. This led to a warm friendship between them.

Dibdin's letter of discovery was signed D. Hence Lamb's fumbling after his Christian name, which he probably knew all the time.

"Familiar to the D——n name." I have not traced the quotation that was in Lamb's mind.]

LETTER 301

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. 3 May 1823.]

DEAR Sir—I am vexed to be two letters in your debt, but I have been quite out of the vein lately. A philosophical treatise is wanting, of the causes of the backwardness with which persons after a certain time of life set about writing a letter. I always feel as if I had nothing to say, and the performance generally justifies the presentiment. Taylor and Hessey did foolishly in not admitting the sonnet. Surely it might have followed the B. B. I agree with you in thinking Bowring's paper better than the former. I will inquire about my Letter to the Old Gentleman, but I expect it to *go in*, after those to the Young Gent^n^ are completed. I do not exactly see why the Goose and little Goslings should emblematize *a Quaker poet that has no children*. But after all—perhaps it is a Pelican. The Mene Mene Tekel Upharsin around it I cannot decypher. The songster of the night pouring out her effusions amid a Silent Meeting of Madge Owlets, would be at least intelligible. A full pause here comes upon me, as if I had not a word more left. I will shake my brain. Once—twice—nothing comes up. George Fox recommends waiting on these occasions. I wait. Nothing comes. G. Fox—that sets me off again. I have finished the Journal, and 400 more pages of the *Doctrinals*, which I picked up for 7s. 6d. If I get on at this rate, the Society will be in danger of having two Quaker poets—to patronise. I am at Dalston now, but if, when I go back to Cov. Gar., I find thy friend has not call'd for the Journal, thee must put me in a way of sending it; and if it should happen that the Lender of it, having that volume, has not the other, I shall be most happy in his accept-

ing the Doctrinals, which I shall read but once certainly. It is not a splendid copy, but perfect, save a leaf of Index.

I cannot but think *the London* drags heavily. I miss Janus. And O how it misses Hazlitt! Procter too is affronted (as Janus has been) with their abominable curtailment of his things—some meddling Editor or other—or phantom of one—for neither he nor Janus know their busy friend. But they always find the best part cut out; and they have done well to cut also. I am not so fortunate as to be served in this manner, for I would give a clean sum of money in sincerity to leave them handsomely. But the dogs—T. and H. I mean—will not affront me, and what can I do? must I go on to drivelling? Poor Relations is tolerable—but where shall I get another subject—or who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I assure you it teases me more than it used to please me. Ch. Lloyd has published a sort of Quaker poem, he tells me, and that he has order'd me a copy, but I have not got it. Have you seen it? I must leave a little wafer space, which brings me to an apology for a conclusion. I am afraid of looking back, for I feel all this while I have been writing nothing, but it may show I am alive. Believe me, cordially yours C. LAMB.

NOTE

[The sonnet probably was Mitford's, which was printed in the June number (see page 606). Bowring, afterwards Sir John, was writing in the *London Magazine* on "Spanish Romances."

"The Goose and little Goslings." Possibly the design upon the seal of Barton's last letter.

"Janus." The first mention of Thomas Griffiths Wainewright (see note on page 619), who sometimes wrote in the *London* over the pseudonym Janus Weathercock. John Taylor, Hood and perhaps John Hamilton Reynolds made up the magazine for press. In the May number, in addition to Lamb's "Poor Relations," were contributions from De Quincey, Hartley Coleridge, Cary, and Barton. But it was not what it had been.

Lloyd's Quaker poem would probably be one of those in his *Poems*, 1823, which contains some of his most interesting work.]

LETTER 302

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN BATES DIBDIN

[P.M. May 6, 1823.]

DEAR Sir—Your verses were very pleasant, and I shall like to see more of them—I do not mean *addressed to me*.

I do not know whether you live in town or country, but if it

suits your convenience I shall be glad to see you some evening—say Thursday—at 20 Great Russell Street, Cov^t Garden. If you can come, do not trouble yourself to write. We are old fashiond people who *drink tea* at six, or not much later, and give cold mutton and pickle at nine, the good old hour. I assure you (if it suit you) we shall be glad to see you.—

Yours, etc. C. LAMB.

E.I.H., Tuesday,
Some day of May 1823.
Not official.

My love to Mr. Railton.
The same to Mr. Rankin,
to the whole Firm indeed.

NOTE

[The verses are not, I fear, now recoverable. Dibdin's firm was Railton, Rankin & Co., in Old Jury.

Here should come a letter from Lamb to Hone, dated May 19, 1823. William Hone (1780-1842), who then, his stormy political days over, was publishing antiquarian works on Ludgate Hill, had sent Lamb his *Ancient Mysteries Described*, 1823. Lamb thanks him for it, and invites him to 14 Kingsland Row, Dalston, the next Sunday: "We dine exactly at 4."]

LETTER 303

MARY LAMB TO MRS. RANDAL NORRIS

Hastings, at Mrs. Gibbs, York Cottage,
Priory, No. 4. [June 18, 1823.]

MY dear Friend,—Day after day has passed away, and my brother has said, "I will write to Mrs. [? Mr.] Norris to-morrow," and therefore I am resolved to write to *Mrs. Norris* to-day, and trust him no longer. We took our places for Sevenoaks, intending to remain there all night in order to see Knole, but when we got there we chang'd our minds, and went on to Tunbridge Wells. About a mile short of the Wells the coach stopped at a little inn, and I saw, "Lodgings to let" on a little, very little house opposite. I ran over the way, and secured them before the coach drove away, and we took immediate possession: it proved a very comfortable place, and we remained there nine days. The first evening, as we were wandering about, we met a lady, the wife of one of the India House clerks, with whom we had been slightly acquainted some years ago, which slight acquaintance has been ripened into a great intimacy during the nine pleasant days that we passed at the Wells. She and her two daughters went with us in an open chaise to Knole, and as the chaise held only five, we

mounted Miss James upon a little horse, which she rode famously. I was very much pleased with Knole, and still more with Penshurst, which we also visited. We saw Frant and the Rocks, and made much use of your Guide Book, only Charles lost his way once going by the map. We were in constant exercise the whole time, and spent our time so pleasantly that when we came here on Monday we missed our new friends and found ourselves very dull. We are by the seaside in a *still less* house, and we have exchanged a very pretty landlady for a very ugly one, but she is equally attractive to us. We eat turbot, and we drink smuggled Hollands, and we walk up hill and down hill all day long. In the little intervals of rest that we allow ourselves I teach Miss James French; she picked up a few words during her foreign Tour with us, and she has had a hankering after it ever since.

We came from Tunbridge Wells in a Postchaise, and would have seen Battle Abbey on the way, but it is only shewn on a Monday. We are trying to coax Charles into a Monday's excursion. And Bexhill we are also thinking about. Yesterday evening we found out by chance the most beautiful view I ever saw. It is called "The Lovers' Seat." . . . You have been here, therefore you must have seen [it, or] is it only Mr. and Mrs. Faint who have visited Hastings? [Tell Mrs.] Faint that though in my haste to get housed I d[ecided on] . . . ice's lodgings, yet it comforted all th . . . to know that I had a place in view.

I suppose you are so busy that it is not fair to ask you to write me a line to say how you are going on. Yet if any one of you have half an hour to spare for that purpose, it will be most thankfully received. Charles joins with me in love to you all together, and to each one in particular upstairs and downstairs.

Yours most affectionately,

M. Lamb.

June 18

Note

[Mr. Hazlitt dates this letter 1825 or 1826, and considers it to refer to a second visit to Hastings; but I think most probably it refers to the 1823 visit, especially as the Lovers' Seat would assuredly have been discovered then. Miss James was Mary Lamb's nurse. Mrs. Randal Norris had been a Miss Faint.

There is a curious similarity between a passage in this letter and in one of Byron's, written in 1814: "I have been swimming, and eating turbot, and smuggling neat brandies, and silk handkerchiefs . . . and walking on cliffs and tumbling down hills."

A Hastings guide book for 1825 gives Mrs. Gibbs' address as 4 York Cottages, near Priory Bridge. Near by, in Pelham Place, a Mr. Hogsflesh had a lodging-house.]

LETTER 304

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. 10 July, 1823.]

DEAR Sir—I shall be happy to read the MS. and to forward it; but T. and H. must judge for themselves of publication. If it prove interesting (as I doubt not) I shall not spare to say so, you may depend upon it. Suppose you direct it to Acco^ts. Office, India House.

I am glad you have met with some sweetening circumstances to your unpalatable draught. I have just returned from Hastings, where are exquisite views and walks, and where I have given up my soul to walking, and I am now suffering sedentary contrasts. I am a long time reconciling to Town after one of these excursions. Home is become strange, and will remain so yet a while. Home is the most unforgiving of friends and always resents Absence; I know its old cordial looks will return, but they are slow in clearing up. That is one of the features of this *our* galley slavery, that peregrination ended makes things worse. I felt out of water (with all the sea about me) at Hastings, and just as I had learned to domiciliate there, I must come back to find a home which is no home. I abused Hastings, but learned its value. There are spots, inland bays, etc., which realise the notions of Juan Fernandez.

The best thing I lit upon by accident was a small country church (by whom or when built unknown) standing bare and single in the midst of a grove, with no house or appearance of habitation within a quarter of a mile, only passages diverging from it thro' beautiful woods to so many farm houses. There it stands, like the first idea of a church, before parishioners were thought of, nothing but birds for its congregation, or like a Hermit's oratory (the Hermit dead), or a mausoleum, its effect singularly impressive, like a church found in a desert isle to startle Crusoe with a home image; you must make out a vicar and a congregation from fancy, for surely none come there. Yet it wants not its pulpit, and its font, and all the seemly additaments of *our* worship.

Southey has attacked Elia on the score of infidelity, in the Quarterly, Article, "Progress of Infidels [Infidelity]." I had not, nor have, seen the Monthly. He might have spared an old friend such a construction of a few careless flights, that meant no harm to religion. If all his UNGUARDED expressions on the subject were to be collected——

But I love and respect Southey—and will not retort. I HATE HIS REVIEW, and his being a Reviewer.

The hint he has droppd will knock the sale of the book on the head, which was almost at a stop before.

Let it stop. There is corn in Egypt, while there is cash at Leadenhall. You and I are something besides being Writers Thank God.

Yours truly C. L.

NOTE

[What the MS. was I do not know. Lamb recurs more fully to the description of the little church—probably Hollingdon Rural, about three miles north-west from the town—in Letters 332 and 378, on pages 648 and 708.

The thoughts in the second paragraph of this letter were amplified in the *Elia* essay "The Old Margate Hoy," in the *London Magazine* for July, 1823.

"Southey has attacked Elia." In an article in the *Quarterly* for January, 1823, in a review of a work by Grégoire on Deism in France, under the title "The Progress of Infidelity," Southey had a reference to *Elia* in the following terms: "Unbelievers have not always been honest enough thus to express their real feelings; but this we know concerning them, that when they have renounced their birthright of hope, they have not been able to divest themselves of fear. From the nature of the human mind this might be presumed, and in fact it is so. They may deaden the heart and stupify the conscience, but they cannot destroy the imaginative faculty. There is a remarkable proof of this in *Elia's Essays*, a book which wants only a sounder religious feeling, to be as delightful as it is original." And then Southey went on to draw attention to the case of Thornton Hunt, the little child of Leigh Hunt, the (to Southey) notorious freethinker, who, as Lamb had stated in the essay "Witches and Other Night Fears," would wake at night in terror of images of fear.

"I will not retort." Lamb, as we shall see, changed his mind.

"Almost at a stop before." *Elia* was never popular until long after Lamb's death. It did not reach a second edition until 1836. There are now several new editions every year.]

LETTER 305

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[July, 1823.]

DR. A.—I expect Proctor and Wainwright (Janus W.) this evening; will you come? I suppose it is but a compt to ask Mrs. Alsop; but it is none to say that we should be most glad to see her. Yours ever. How vexed I am at your Dalston expeditn. C. L.

Tuesday.

NOTE

[Mrs. Allsop was a daughter of Mrs. Jordan, and had herself been an actress.]

LETTER 306

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[Dated at end: 2 September [1823].]

DEAR B. B.—What will you say to my not writing? You cannot say I do not write now. Hessey has not used your kind sonnet, nor have I seen it. Pray send me a Copy. Neither have I heard any more of your Friend's MS., which I will reclaim, whenever you please. When you come London-ward you will find me no longer in Covt Gard. I have a Cottage, in Colebrook row, Islington. A cottage, for it is detach'd; a white house, with 6 good rooms; the New River (rather elderly by this time) runs (if a moderate walking pace can be so termed) close to the foot of the house; and behind is a spacious garden, with vines (I assure you), pears, strawberries, parsnips, leeks, carrots, cabbages, to delight the heart of old Alcinous. You enter without passage into a cheerful dining room, all studded over and rough with old Books, and above is a lightsome Drawing room, 3 windows, full of choice prints. I feel like a great Lord, never having had a house before.

The London I fear falls off.—I linger among its creaking rafters, like the last rat. It will topple down, if they don't get some Buttresses. They have pull'd down three, W. Hazlitt, Proctor, and their best stay, kind light hearted Wainwright—their Janus. The best is, neither of our fortunes is concern'd in it.

I heard of you from Mr. Pulham this morning, and that gave a fillip to my Laziness, which has been intolerable. But I am so

taken up with pruning and gardening, quite a new sort of occupation to me. I have gather'd my Jargonels, but my Windsor Pears are backward. The former were of exquisite raciness. I do now sit under my own vine, and contemplate the growth of vegetable nature. I can now understand in what sense they speak of FATHER ADAM. I recognise the paternity, while I watch my tulips. I almost FELL with him, for the first day I turned a drunken gard'ner (as he let in the serpent) into my Eden, and he laid about him, lopping off some choice boughs, &c., which hung over from a neighbor's garden, and in his blind zeal laid waste a shade, which had sheltered their window from the gaze of passers by. The old gentlewoman (fury made her not handsome) could scarcely be reconciled by all my fine words. There was no buttering her parsnips. She talk'd of the Law. What a lapse to commit on the first day of my happy "garden-state."

I hope you transmitted the Fox-Journal to its Owner with suitable thanks.

Mr. Cary, the Dante-man, dines with me to-day. He is a model of a country Parson, lean (as a Curate ought to be), modest, sensible, no obtruder of church dogmas, quite a different man from Southey, —you would like him.

Pray accept this for a Letter, and believe me with sincere regards
Yours C. L.

2 Sept.

NOTE

["Your kind sonnet." Barton's well-known sonnet to Elia (quoted on page 645) had been printed in the *London Magazine* long before—in the previous February. I do not identify this one among his writings.

"I have a Cottage." This cottage still stands (1904). Within it is much as in Lamb's day, but outwardly changed, for a new house has been built on one side and it is thus no longer detached. The New River still runs before it, but subterraneously. There is no tablet on the house; there is no tablet on any of Lamb's houses.

Barton was so attracted by one at least of Lamb's similes that, I fancy, he borrowed it for an account of his grandfather's house at Tottenham which he wrote some time later; for I find that gentleman's garden described as "equal to that of old Alcinous."

"Kind light hearted Wainwright." Lamb has caused much surprise by using such words of one who was destined to become almost the most cold-blooded criminal in English history; but, as Hartley Coleridge wrote in another connection, it was Lamb's way to take things by the better handle, and Wainewright's worse faults in those days seem to have been extravagance and affectation. Lamb at any rate liked him and Wainewright was

proud to be on a footing with Elia and his sister, as we know from his writings. Wainewright at this time was not quite twenty-nine; he had painted several pictures, some of which were accepted by the academy, and he had written a number of essays over several different pseudonyms, chief of which was Janus Weathercock. He lived in Great Marlborough Street in some style and there entertained many literary men, among them Lamb. It was not until 1826 that his criminal career began.

"Mr. Pulham"—Brook Pulham of the India House, who made the caricature etching of Elia.

"While I watch my tulips." Lamb is, of course, embroidering here, but we have it on the authority of George Daniel, the antiquary, that with his removal to Colebrooke Cottage began an interest in horticulture, particularly in roses.

"Garden-state." From Marvell's "Garden," verse 8, line 1:—

Such was that happy garden-state.

"Mr. Cary." The Rev. Henry Francis Cary (1772-1844), the translator of Dante and afterwards, 1826, Assistant-Keeper of the Printed Books in the British Museum. A regular contributor to the *London Magazine*.]

LETTERS 307 TO 310

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[Dated at end: Sept. 6 [1823].]

DEAR Alsop—I am snugly seated at the cottage; Mary is well but weak, and comes home on *Monday;* she will soon be strong enough to see her friends here. In the mean time will you dine with me at ½ past four to-morrow? Ayrton and Mr. Burney are coming.

Colebrook Cottage, left hand side, end of Colebrook Row on the western brink of the New River, a detach'd whitish house.

No answer is required but come if you can. C. LAMB.

Saturday 6th Sep.

I call'd on you on Sunday. Respcts to Mrs. A. & boy.

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[P.M.: Sept. 9, 1823.]

MY dear A.—I am going to ask you to do me the greatest favour which a man can do to another. I want to make my will, and to leave my property in trust for my sister. *N.B.*

I am not *therefore* going to die.—Would it be unpleasant for you to be named for one? The other two I shall beg the same favor of are Talfourd and Proctor. If you feel reluctant, tell me, and it sha'n't abate one jot of my friendly feeling toward you.

Yours ever, C. LAMB.

E. I. House, Aug. [*i.e.*, Sept.] 9, 1823.

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[P.M. September 10, 1823.]

MY dear A.—Your kindness in accepting my request no words of mine can repay. It has made you overflow into some romance which I should have check'd at another time. I hope it may be in the scheme of Providence that my sister may go first (if ever so little a precedence), myself next, and my good Ex^rs survive to rememb^r us with kindness many years. God bless you.

I will set Proctor about the will forthwith. C. LAMB.

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[September, 1823.]

DEAR A.—Your Cheese is the best I ever tasted; Mary will tell you so hereafter. She is at home, but has disappointed me. She has gone back rather than improved. However, she has sense enough to value the present, for she is greatly fond of Stilton. Yours is the delicatest rain-bow-hued melting piece I ever flavoured. Believe me. I took it the more kindly, following so great a kindness.

Depend upon't, yours shall be one of the first houses we shall present ourselves at, when we have got our Bill of Health.

Being both yours and Mrs. Allsop's truly. C. L. & M. L.

NOTE

[Allsop and Procter may have been named as executors of Lamb's will at one time, but when it came to be proved the executors were Talfourd and Ryle, a fellow-clerk in the India House.]

LETTER 311

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. September 17, 1823.]

DEAR Sir—I have again been reading your stanzas on Bloomfield, which are the most appropriate that can be imagined, sweet with Doric delicacy. I like that

Our more chaste Theocritus—

just hinting at the fault of the Grecian. I love that stanza ending with

Words phrases fashions pass away;
But Truth and nature live through all.

But I shall omit in my own copy the one stanza which alludes to Lord B.—I suppose. It spoils the sweetness and oneness of the feeling. Cannot we think of Burns, or Thompson, without sullying the thought with a reflection out of place upon Lord Rochester? These verses might have been inscribed upon a tomb; are in fact an epitaph; satire does not look pretty upon a tombstone. Besides, there is a quotation in it, always bad in verse; seldom advisable in prose.

I doubt if their having been in a Paper will not prevent T. and H. from insertion, but I shall have a thing to send in a day or two, and shall try them. Omitting that stanza, a *very little* alteration is wanting in the beginning of the next. You see, I use freedom. How happily (I flatter not!) you have brot in his subjects; and, (*I suppose*) his favorite measure, though I am not acquainted with any of his writings but the Farmer's Boy. He dined with me once, and his manners took me exceedingly.

I rejoyce that you forgive my long silence. I continue to estimate my own-roof comforts highly. How could I remain all my life a lodger! My garden thrives (I am told) tho' I have yet reaped nothing but some tiny sallad, and withered carrots. But a garden's a garden anywhere, and twice a garden in London.

Somehow I cannot relish that word Horkey. Cannot you supply it by circumlocution, and direct the reader by a note to explain that it means the Horkey. But Horkey choaks me in the Text. It raises crowds of mean associations, Hawking and sp——g, Gauky, Stalky, Maukin. The sound is every thing, in such dulcet modulations 'specially. I like

Gilbert Meldrum's sterner tones,

without knowing who Gilbert Meldrum is. You have slipt in your rhymes as if they grew there, so natural-artificially, or artificial-naturally. There's a vile phrase.

Do you go on with your Quaker Sonnets—[to] have 'em ready with Southey's Book of the Church? I meditate a letter to S. in the London, which perhaps will meet the fate of the Sonnet.

Excuse my brevity, for I write painfully at office, liable to 100 callings off. And I can never sit down to an epistle elsewhere. I read or walk. If you return this letter to the Post Office, I think they will return 4d, seeing it is but half a one. Believe me tho' entirely yours C. L.

NOTE

[Barton's "Verses to the Memory of Bloomfield, the Suffolk Poet" (who died in August, 1823), were printed in book form in his *Poetic Vigils*, 1824. This is the stanza that Lamb most liked :—

> It is not quaint and local terms
> Besprinkled o'er thy rustic lay,
> Though well such dialect confirms
> Its power unletter'd minds to sway,
> It is not *these* that most display
> Thy sweetest charms, thy gentlest thrall,—
> Words, phrases, fashions, pass away,
> But TRUTH and NATURE live through all.

The stanza referring to Byron was not reprinted, nor was the word Horkey, which means Harvest Home in Suffolk. Gilbert Meldrum is a character in one of Bloomfield's *Rural Tales*.

"Seldom advisable in prose." Lamb's editors would have a lighter task had he practised this precept.

"Quaker Sonnets." Barton did not carry out this project. Southey's *Book of the Church* was published in 1824.

"I meditate a letter to S." The "Letter of Elia to Mr. Southey" was published in the *London Magazine* for October, 1823.]

LETTER 312

(*Fragment*)

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES LLOYD

[No date. Autumn, 1823.]

YOUR lines are not to be understood reading on one leg. They are *sinuous*, and to be won with wrestling. I assure you in sincerity that nothing you have done has given me greater satisfaction. Your obscurity, where you are dark, which is seldom, is that of too much meaning, not the painful obscurity which no toil of the reader can dissipate; not the dead vacuum and floundering place in which imagination finds no footing; it is not the dimness of positive darkness, but of distance; and he that reads and not discerns must get a better pair of spectacles. I admire every piece in the collection; I cannot say the first is best; when I do so, the last read rises up in judgment. To your Mother—to your Sister—to Mary dead—they are all weighty with thought and tender with sentiment. Your poetry is like no other :—those cursed Dryads and Pagan trumperies of modern verse have put me out of conceit of the very name of poetry. Your verses are as good and as wholesome as prose; and I have made a sad blunder if I do not leave you with an impression that your present is rarely valued.

CHARLES LAMB.

NOTE

[This scrap is in *Selections from the Poems and Letters of Bernard Barton*, 1849, edited by Edward FitzGerald and Lucy Barton. Lloyd says: "I had a very ample testimony from C. Lamb to the character of my last little volume. I will transcribe to you what he says, as it is but a note, and his manner is always so original, that I am sure the introduction of the merest trifle from his pen will well compensate for the absence of any-thing of mine." The volume was *Poems*, 1823, one of the chief of which was "Stanzas on the Difficulty with which, in Youth, we Bring Home to our Habitual Consciousness, the Idea of Death," to which Lloyd appended the following sentence from Elia's essay on "New Year's Eve," as motto: "Not childhood alone, but the young man till thirty, never feels practically that he is mortal. He knows it indeed, and, if need were, he could preach a homily on the fragility of life; but he brings it not home to himself, any more than in a hot June, we can appropriate to our imagination the freezing days of December."]

LETTER 313

CHARLES LAMB TO REV. H. F. CARY

India Office, 14th Oct., 1823.

DEAR Sir,—If convenient, will you give us house room on Saturday next? I can sleep anywhere. If another Sunday suit you better, pray let me know. We were talking of Roast *Shoulder* of Mutton with onion sauce; but I scorn to prescribe to the hospitalities of mine host.

With respects to Mrs. C., yours truly, C. LAMB.

LETTER 314

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[No date. ? Oct., 1823.]

DEAR Sir—Mary has got a cold, and the nights are dreadful; but at the first indication of Spring (*alias* the first dry weather in Novr early) it is our intention to surprise you early some eveng.

Believe me, most truly yours,

C. L.

The Cottage, Saturday night.

Mary regrets very much Mrs. Allsop's fruitless visit. It made her swear! She was gone to visit Miss Hutchins[n], whom she found OUT.

LETTER 315

CHARLES LAMB TO J. B. DIBDIN

[P.M. October 28, 1823.]

MY dear Sir—Your Pig was a *picture* of a pig, and your Picture a *pig* of a picture. The former was delicious but evanescent, like a hearty fit of mirth, or the crackling of thorns under a pot; but the latter is an *idea*, and abideth. I never before saw swine upon sattin. And then that pretty strawy canopy about him! he seems to purr (rather than grunt) his satisfaction. Such a gentlemanlike porker too! Morland's are absolutely clowns to it. Who the deuce painted it?

I have ordered a little gilt shrine for it, and mean to wear it for a locket; a shirt-pig.

I admire the petty-toes shrouded in a veil of something, not *mud*, but that warm soft consistency with [? which] the dust takes in Elysium after a spring shower—it perfectly engloves them.

I cannot enough thank you and your country friend for the delicate double present—the Utile et Decorum—three times have I attempted to write this sentence and failed; which shows that I am not cut out for a pedant.

Sir

(as I say to Southey) will you come and see us at our poor cottage of Colebrook to tea tomorrow evening, as early as six? I have some friends coming at that hour—

The panoply which covered your material pig shall be forthcoming—The pig pictorial, with its trappings, domesticate with me.

Your greatly obliged

ELIA.

Tuesdy.

NOTE

["The crackling of thorns" (Eccles. vii. 6).

"Morland's"—George Morland, the painter.

"*Utile et Decorum.*" A very common tag. But Lamb may have been thinking of—

Dulce et decorum est pro patriâ mori.

Horace, *Odes*, III., ii., 13.

"*Sir* (as I say to Southey)." Elia's Letter in the *London Magazine* begins thus.]

LETTER 316

CHARLES LAMB TO SARAH HAZLITT

[No date. Early November, 1823.]

DEAR Mrs. H.,—Sitting down to write a letter is such a painful operation to Mary, that you must accept me as her proxy. You have seen our house. What I now tell you is literally true. Yesterday week George Dyer called upon us, at one o'clock (*bright noon day*) on his way to dine with Mrs. Barbauld at Newington. He sat with Mary about half an hour, and took leave. The maid saw him go out from her kitchen window; but suddenly losing sight of him, ran up in a fright to Mary. G. D., instead of keeping the slip that leads to the gate, had deliberately, staff in hand, in broad open day, marched into the New River. He had not his spectacles on, and you know his absence. Who helped him out, they can hardly tell; but between 'em they got him out, drenched thro' and thro'. A mob collected by that time, and accompanied him in. "Send for the Doctor!" they said: and a one-eyed fellow, dirty and drunk, was fetched from the Public House at the end, where it seems he lurks, for the sake of picking up water practice, having formerly had a medal from the Humane Society for some rescue. By his advice, the patient was put between blankets; and when I came home at four to dinner, I found G. D. a-bed, and raving, light-headed with the brandy-and-water which the doctor had administered. He sung, laughed, whimpered, screamed, babbled of guardian angels, would get up and go home; but we kept him there by force; and by next morning he departed sobered, and seems to have received no injury. All my friends are open-mouthed about having paling before the river, but I cannot see that, because a . . . lunatic chooses to walk into a river with his eyes open at midday, I am any the more likely to be drowned in it, coming home at midnight.

I had the honour of dining at the Mansion House on Thursday last, by special card from the Lord Mayor, who never saw my face, nor I his; and all from being a writer in a magazine! The dinner costly, served on massy plate, champagne, pines, &c.; forty-seven present, among whom the Chairman and two other directors of the India Company. There's for you! and got away pretty sober! Quite saved my credit!

We continue to like our house prodigiously. Does Mary Hazlitt go on with her novel, or has she begun another? I would not dis-

LAMB'S HOUSE IN COLEBROOKE ROW, ISLINGTON,
AS IT IS TO-DAY (1905)

THE NEW RIVER NOW RUNS UNDERGROUND TO THE RIGHT OF THE RAILINGS

courage her, tho' we continue to think it (so far) in its present state not saleable.

Our kind remembrances to her and hers and you and yours.—

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

I am pleased that H. liked my letter to the Laureate.

NOTE

[Addressed to "Mrs. Hazlitt, Alphington, near Exeter."

This letter is the first draft of the *Elia* essay "Amicus Redivivus," which was printed in the *London Magazine* in December, 1823. George Dyer, who was then sixty-eight, had been getting blind steadily for some years. A visit to Lamb's cottage to-day (the little end white house in the accompanying picture), bearing in mind that the ribbon of green between iron railings that extends along Colebrooke Row was at that time an open stream, will make the nature of G. D.'s misadventure quite plain.

"Mary Hazlitt"—the daughter of John Hazlitt, the essayist's brother. See Letter 327.

"I am pleased that H. liked my letter to the Laureate." Hazlitt wrote, in the essay "On the Pleasures of Hating," "I think I must be friends with Lamb again, since he has written that magnanimous Letter to Southey, and told him a piece of his mind!" Coleridge also approved of it, and Crabb Robinson's praise was excessive.]

LETTER 317

CHARLES LAMB TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

E. I. H., 21st November, 1823.

DEAR Southey,—The kindness of your note has melted away the mist which was upon me. I have been fighting against a shadow. That accursed "Quarterly Review" had vexed me by a gratuitous speaking, of its own knowledge, that the "Confessions of a Drunkard" was a genuine description of the state of the writer. Little things, that are not ill meant, may produce much ill. *That* might have injured me alive and dead. I am in a public office, and my life is insured. I was prepared for anger, and I thought I saw, in a few obnoxious words, a hard case of repetition directed against me. I wished both magazine and review at the bottom of the sea. I shall be ashamed to see you, and my sister (though innocent) will be still more so; for the folly was done without her knowledge, and has made her uneasy ever since. My guardian angel was absent at that time.

I will muster up courage to see you, however, any day next week (Wednesday excepted). We shall hope that you will bring Edith with you. That will be a second mortification. She will hate to see us; but come and heap embers. We deserve it, I for what I've done, and she for being my sister.

Do come early in the day, by sun-light, that you may see my *Milton*.

I am at Colebrook Cottage, Colebrook Row, Islington. A detached whitish house, close to the New River, end of Colebrook Terrace, left hand from Sadler's Wells.

Will you let me know the day before?

Your penitent C. LAMB.

P.S.—I do not think your handwriting at all like Hunt's. I do not think many things I did think.

NOTE

[For the right appreciation of this letter Elia's Letter to Southey must be read (see Vol. I. of the present edition, page 226). It was hard hitting, and though Lamb would perhaps have been wiser had he held his hand, yet Southey had taken an offensive line of moral superiority and rebuke, and much that was said by Lamb was justified.

Southey's reply, which I am permitted by Miss Warter to print, ran thus:—

MY DEAR LAMB—On Monday I saw your letter in the *London Magazine*, which I had not before had an opportunity of seeing, and I now take the first interval of leisure for replying to it.

Nothing could be further from my mind than any intention or apprehension of any way offending or injuring a man concerning whom I have never spoken, thought, or felt otherwise than with affection, esteem, and admiration.

If you had let me know in any private or friendly manner that you felt wounded by a sentence in which nothing but kindness was intended—or that you found it might injure the sale of your book—I would most readily and gladly have inserted a note in the next Review to qualify and explain what had hurt you.

You have made this impossible, and I am sorry for it. But I will not engage in controversy with you to make sport for the Philistines.

The provocation must be strong indeed that can rouse me to do this, even with an enemy. And if you can forgive an unintended offence as heartily as I do the way in which you have resented it, there will be nothing to prevent our meeting as we have heretofore done, and feeling towards each other as we have always been wont to do.

Only signify a correspondent willingness on your part, and send me your address, and my first business next week shall be to reach your door, and shake hands with you and your sister. Remember me to her most kindly and believe me—Yours, with unabated esteem and regards, ROBERT SOUTHEY.

The matter closed with this exchange of letters, and no hostility remained on either side.

Lamb's quarrel with the *Quarterly* began in 1811, when in a review of Weber's edition of Ford Lamb was described as a "poor

maniac." It was renewed in 1814, when his article on Wordsworth's *Excursion* was mutilated. It broke out again in 1822, as Lamb says here, when a reviewer of Reid's treatise on *Hypochondriasis and other Nervous Affections* (supposed to be Dr. Gooch, a friend of Dr. Henry Southey's) referred to Lamb's "Confessions of a Drunkard" (see Vol. I. of the present edition, page 133) as being, from his own knowledge, true. Thus Lamb's patience was naturally at breaking point when his own friend Southey attacked *Elia* a few numbers later.

"I do not think your handwriting at all like Hunt's." Lamb had said, in the Letter, of Leigh Hunt: "His hand-writing is so much the same with your own, that I have opened more than one letter of his, hoping, nay, not doubting, but it was from you, and have been disappointed (he will bear with my saying so) at the discovery of my error."]

LETTER 318

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. November 22, 1823.]

DEAR B. B.—I am ashamed at not acknowledging your kind little poem, which I must needs like much, but I protest I thought I had done it at the moment. Is it possible a letter has miscarried? Did you get one in which I sent you an extract from the poems of Lord Sterling? I should wonder if you did, for I sent you none such.—There was an incipient LYE strangled in the birth. Some people's conscience is so tender! But in plain truth I thank you very much for the verses. I have a very kind letter from the Laureat, with a self-invitation to come and shake hands with me. This is truly handsome and noble. 'Tis worthy of my OLD IDEA of Southey. Shall not I, think you, be covered with a red suffusion?

You are too much apprehensive of your complaint. I know many that are always ailing of it, and live on to a good old age. I know a merry fellow (you partly know him) who when his Medical Adviser told him he had drunk away all *that part*, congratulated himself (now his liver was gone) that he should be the longest LIVER of the two. The best way in these cases is to keep yourself as ignorant as you can—as ignorant as the world was before Galen—of the entire inner construction of the Animal Man—not to be conscious of a midriff—to hold kidneys (save of sheep and swine) to be an agreeable fiction—not to know whereabout the gall grows—to account the circulation of the blood an idle whimsey of Harvey's—

to acknowledge no mechanism not visible. For, once fix the seat of your disorder, and your fancies flux into it like bad humours. Those medical gentries chuse each his favourite part—one takes the lungs—another the aforesaid liver—and refer to *that* whatever in the animal economy is amiss. Above all, use exercise, take a little more spirituous liquors, learn to smoke, continue to keep a good conscience, and avoid tampering with hard terms of art—viscosity, schirossity, and those bugbears, by which simple patients are scared into their grave. Believe the general sense of the mercantile world, which holds that desks are not deadly. It is the mind, good B. B., and not the limbs, that taints by long sitting. Think of the patience of taylors—think how long the Chancellor sits—think of the Brooding Hen.

I protest I cannot answer thy Sister's kind enquiry, but I judge I shall put forth no second volume. More praise than buy, and T. and H. are not particularly disposed for Martyrs.

Thou wilt see a funny passage, and yet a true History, of George Dyer's Aquatic Incursion, in the next "London." Beware his fate, when thou comest to see me at my Colebrook Cottage. I have filled my little space with my little thoughts. I wish thee ease on thy sofa, but not too much indulgence on it. From my poor desk, thy fellow-sufferer this bright November, C. L.

NOTE

[Again I do not identify the kind little poem. It may have been a trifle enclosed in a letter, which Barton did not print and Lamb destroyed.]

LETTER 319

CHARLES LAMB TO W. HARRISON AINSWORTH

India-House, 9th Dec., 1823.

(If I had time I would go over this letter again, and dot all my *i*'s.)

DEAR Sir,—I should have thanked you for your Books and Compliments sooner, but have been waiting for a revise to be sent, which does not come, tho' I returned the proof on the receit of your letter. I have read Warner with great pleasure. What an elaborate piece of alliteration and antithesis! why it must have been a labour far above the most difficult versification. There is a fine simile of or picture of Semiramis arming to repel a siege. I do not mean to keep the Book, for I suspect you are forming a

curious collection, and I do not pretend to any thing of the kind. I have not a Blackletter Book among mine, old Chaucer excepted, and am not Bibliomanist enough to like Blackletter. It is painful to read. Therefore I must insist on returning it at opportunity, not from contumacity and reluctance to be oblig'd, but because it must suit you better than me. The loss of a present *from* should never exceed the gain of a present *to*. I hold this maxim infallible in the accepting Line. I read your Magazines with satisfaction. I throughly agree with you as to the German Faust, as far [as] I can do justice to it from an English translation. 'Tis a disagreeable canting tale of Seduction, which has nothing to do with the Spirit of Faustus—Curiosity. Was the dark secret to be explored to end in the seducing of a weak girl, which might have been accomplished by earthly agency? When Marlow gives *his* Faustus a mistress, he flies him at Helen, flower of Greece, to be sure, and not at Miss Betsy, or Miss Sally Thoughtless.

> "Cut is the branch that bore the goodly fruit,
> And wither'd is Apollo's laurel tree:
> Faustus is dead."

What a noble natural transition from metaphor to plain speaking! as if the figurative had flagged in description of such a Loss, and was reduced to tell the fact simply.—

I must now thank you for your very kind invitation. It is not out of prospect that I may see Manchester some day, and then I will avail myself of your kindness. But Holydays are scarce things with me, and the Laws of attendance are getting stronger and stronger at Leadenhall. But I shall bear it in mind. Meantime something may (more probably) bring you to town, where I shall be happy to see you. I am always to be found (alas!) at my desk in the forepart of the day.

I wonder why they do not send the revise. I leave late at office, and my abode lies out of the way, or I should have seen about it. If you are impatient, Perhaps a Line to the Printer, directing him to send it me, at Accountant's Office, may answer. You will see by the scrawl that I only snatch a few minutes from intermitting Business.

Your oblig. Ser., C. Lamb.

Note

[Ainsworth had sent Lamb William Warner's *Syrinx; or, A Sevenfold History*, 1597. The book was a gift, and is now in the Dyce and Foster library at South Kensington.

Goethe's *Faust*. Lamb, as we have seen, had read the account of the play in Madame de Staël's *Germany*. He might also have

read the translation by Lord Francis Leveson-Gower, 1823. Hayward's translation was not published till 1834. Lamb misquotes Marlowe's "Faustus." The passage runs (Scene xvi. (*a*)) :—

> Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight,
> And burnèd is Apollo's laurel bough
> That sometime grew within this learned man:
> Faustus is gone.

Lamb gives it in his *Dramatic Specimens*. Goethe admired Lamb's sonnet on his family name.

"Manchester." Ainsworth was still a solicitor's pupil at Manchester. The letter is addressed to him at 10 King's Street in that city.]

LETTER 320

CHARLES LAMB TO W. HARRISON AINSWORTH

[Dated at end: December 29 (1823).]

MY dear Sir—You talk of months at a time and I know not what inducements to visit Manchester, Heaven knows how gratifying! but I have had my little month of 1823 already. It is all over, and without incurring a disagreeable favor I cannot so much as get a single holyday till the season returns with the next year. Even our half-hour's absences from office are set down in a Book! Next year, if I can spare a day or two of it, I will come to Manchester, but I have reasons at home against longer absences.—

I am so ill just at present—(an illness of my own procuring last night; who is Perfect?)—that nothing but your very great kindness could make me write. I will bear in mind the letter to W. W., you shall have it quite in time, before the 12.

My aking and confused Head warns me to leave off.—With a muddled sense of gratefulness, which I shall apprehend more clearly to-morrow, I remain, your friend unseen, C. L.

I. H. 29th.

Will your occasions or inclination bring *you* to London? It will give me great pleasure to show you every thing that Islington can boast, if you know the meaning of that very Cockney sound. We have the New River!

I am asham'd of this scrawl: but I beg you to accept it for the present. I am full of qualms.

A fool at 50 is a fool indeed.

NOTE

[W. W. was Wordsworth.

"A fool at 50 is a fool indeed." "A fool at forty is a fool indeed" was Young's line in Satire II. of the series on "Love of Fame." Lamb was nearing forty-nine.]

LETTER 321

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[January 9, 1824.]

DEAR B. B.—Do you know what it is to succumb under an insurmountable day mare—a whoreson lethargy, Falstaff calls it—an indisposition to do any thing, or to be any thing—a total deadness and distaste—a suspension of vitality—an indifference to locality—a numb soporifical goodfornothingness—an ossification all over—an oyster-like insensibility to the passing events—a mind-stupor,—a brawny defiance to the needles of a thrusting-in conscience—did you ever have a very bad cold, with a total irresolution to submit to water gruel processes?—this has been for many weeks my lot, and my excuse—my fingers drag heavily over this paper, and to my thinking it is three and twenty furlongs from here to the end of this demi-sheet—I have not a thing to say—nothing is of more importance than another—I am flatter than a denial or a pancake—emptier than Judge Park's wig when the head is in it—duller than a country stage when the actors are off it—a cypher—an O—I acknowledge life at all, only by an occasional convulsional cough, and a permanent phlegmatic pain in the chest—I am weary of the world—Life is weary of me—My day is gone into Twilight and I don't think it worth the expence of candles—my wick hath a thief in it, but I can't muster courage to snuff it—I inhale suffocation—I can't distinguish veal from mutton—nothing interests me—'tis 12 o'clock and Thurtell is just now coming out upon the New Drop—Jack Ketch alertly tucking up his greasy sleeves to do the last office of mortality, yet cannot I elicit a groan or a moral reflection—if you told me the world will be at end tomorrow, I should just say, "will it?"—I have not volition enough to dot my i's—much less to comb my EYEBROWS—my eyes are set in my head—my brains are gone out to see a poor relation in Moorfields, and they did not say when they'd come back again—my scull is a Grub street Attic, to let—not so much as a joint stool or a crackd jordan left in it—my hand writes, not I, from habit, as chickens run about a little when their heads

are off—O for a vigorous fit of gout, cholic, tooth ache—an earwig in my auditory, a fly in my visual organs—pain is life—the sharper, the more evidence of life—but this apathy, this death—did you ever have an obstinate cold, a six or seven weeks' unintermitting chill and suspension of hope, fear, conscience, and every thing—yet do I try all I can to cure it, I try wine, and spirits, and smoking, and snuff in unsparing quantities, but they all only seem to make me worse, instead of better—I sleep in a damp room, but it does me no good; I come home late o' nights, but do not find any visible amendment.

Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

It is just 15 minutes after 12. Thurtell is by this time a good way on his journey, baiting at Scorpion perhaps, Ketch is bargaining for his cast coat and waistcoat, the Jew demurs at first at three half crowns, but on consideration that he may get somewhat by showing 'em in the Town, finally closes.— C. L.

NOTE

["A whoreson lethargy." A "whoreson apoplexy" is Falstaff's phrase (2 "Henry IV.," I., 2, 123), but he adds (126), "This apoplexy is, as I take it, a kind of lethargy."

"Judge Park's wig." Sir James Alan Park, of the Bench of Common Pleas, who tried Thurtell, the murderer of Mr. William Weare of Lyon's Inn, in Gill's Hill Lane, Radlett, on October 24, 1823.

"Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans vii. 24).]

LETTER 322

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. January 23, 1824.]

MY dear Sir—That peevish letter of mine, which was meant to convey an apology for my incapacity to write, seems to have been taken by you in too serious a light. It was only my way of telling you I had a severe cold. The fact is I have been insuperably dull and lethargic for many weeks, and cannot rise to the vigour of a Letter, much less an Essay. The London must do without me for a time, a time, and half a time, for I have lost all interest about it, and whether I shall recover it again I know not. I will bridle my pen another time, & not teaze and puzzle you with my aridities. I shall begin to feel a little more alive with the

spring. Winter is to me (mild or harsh) always a great trial of the spirits. I am ashamed not to have noticed your tribute to Woolman, whom we love so much. It is done in your good manner. Your friend Taylor called upon me some time since, and seems a very amiable man. His last story is painfully fine. His Book I "like." It is only too stuft with scripture, too Parsonish. The best thing in it is the Boy's own story. When I say it is too full of Scripture, I mean it is too full of direct quotations; no book can have too much of SILENT SCRIPTURE in it. But the natural power of a story is diminished when the uppermost purpose in the writer seems to be to recommend something else, viz Religion. You know what Horace says of the DEUS INTERSIT. I am not able to explain myself, you must do it for me.—

My Sister's part in the Leicester School (about two thirds) was purely her own; as it was (to the same quantity) in the Shakspeare Tales which bear my name. I wrote only the Witch Aunt, the first going to Church, and the final Story about a little Indian girl in a Ship.

Your account of my Black Balling amused me. *I think, as Quakers, they did right.* There are some things hard to be understood.

The more I think the more I am vexed at having puzzled you with that Letter, but I have been so out of Letter writing of late years, that it is a sore effort to sit down to it, & I felt in your debt, and sat down waywardly to pay you in bad money. Never mind my dulness, I am used to long intervals of it. The heavens seem brass to me—then again comes the refreshing shower. "I have been merry once or twice ere now."

You said something about Mr. Mitford in a late letter, which I believe I did not advert to. I shall be happy to show him my Milton (it is all the show things I have) at any time he will take the trouble of a jaunt to Islington. I do also hope to see Mr. Taylor there some day. Pray say so to both.

Coleridge's book is good part printed, but sticks a little for *more copy*. It bears an unsaleable Title—Extracts from Bishop Leighton—but I am confident there will be plenty of good notes in it, more of Bishop Coleridge than Leighton, I hope; for what is Leighton?

Do you trouble yourself about Libel cases? The Decision against Hunt for the "Vision of Judgment" made me sick. What is to become of the old talk about OUR GOOD OLD KING—his personal virtues saving us from a revolution &c. &c. Why, none that think it can utter it now. It must stink. And the Vision is really, as to Him-ward, such a tolerant good humour'd thing. What a wretched thing a Lord Chief Justice is, always was, & will be!

Keep your good spirits up, dear B B—mine will return—They are at present in abeyance. But I am rather lethargic than miserable. I don't know but a good horse whip would be more beneficial to me than Physic. My head, without aching, will teach yours to ache. It is well I am getting to the conclusion. I will send a better letter when I am a better man. Let me thank you for your kind concern for me (which I trust will have reason soon to be dissipated) & assure you that it gives me pleasure to hear from you.—

Yours truly C. L.

NOTE

["The London must do without me." Lamb contributed nothing between December, 1823 ("Amicus Redivivus"), and September, 1824 ("Blakesmoor in H——shire").

Barton's tribute to Woolman was the poem "A Memorial to John Woolman," printed in *Poetic Vigils*.

Taylor was Charles Benjamin Tayler (1797-1875), the curate of Hadleigh, in Suffolk, and the author of many religious books. Lamb refers to *May You Like It*, 1823.

"What Horace says":—

> Nec deus intersit nisi dignus vindice nodus
> Inciderit.
>
> *Ars Poetica*, 191, 192.

Neither let a god interfere, unless a difficulty worth a god's unravelling should happen (Smart's translation).

"My Black Balling." *Elia* had been rejected by a Book Club in Woodbridge.

"I have been merry once or twice." Master Silence in 2 "Henry IV.," V., 3, 42, confesses to having "been merry twice and once ere now."

"Coleridge's book"—the *Aids to Reflection*, 1825. The first intention had been a selection of "Beauties" from Bishop Leighton (1611-1684), Archbishop of Glasgow, and author, among other works, of *Rules and Instructions for a Holy Life*.

"The Decision against Hunt." John Hunt, the publisher of *The Liberal*, in which Byron's "Vision of Judgment" had been printed in 1822, had just been fined £100 for the libel therein contained on George III.

"My head, without aching." An adaptation of Pope's

> And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer.
>
> Prol. to *Satires*, 202.

Here should come a note from Lamb to Charles Ollier, thanking him for a copy of his *Inesilla; or, The Tempter: A Romance, with Other Tales*.]

LETTER 323

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. February 25, 1824.]

MY dear Sir—Your title of Poetic Vigils arrides me much more than A Volume of Verse, which is no meaning. The motto says nothing, but I cannot suggest a better. I do not like mottoes but where they are singularly felicitous; there is foppery in them. They are unplain, un-Quakerish. They are good only where they flow from the Title and are a kind of justification of it. There is nothing about watchings or lucubrations in the one you suggest, no commentary on Vigils. By the way, a wag would recommend you to the Line of Pope

Sleepless himself—to give his readers sleep—

I by no means wish it. But it may explain what I mean, that a neat motto is child of the Title. I think Poetic Vigils as short and sweet as can be desired; only have an eye on the Proof, that the Printer do not substitute Virgils, which would ill accord with your modesty or meaning. Your suggested motto is antique enough in spelling, and modern enough in phrases; a good modern antique: but the matter of it is germane to the purpose only supposing the title proposed a vindication of yourself from the presumption of authorship. The 1st title was liable to this objection, that if you were disposed to enlarge it, and the bookseller insisted on its appearance in Two Tomes, how oddly it would sound—

A Volume of Verse
in Two Volumes
2d edition &c—

You see thro' my wicked intention of curtailing this Epistolet by the above device of large margin. But in truth the idea of letterising has been oppressive to me of late above your candour to give me credit for. There is Southey, whom I ought to have thank'd a fortnight ago for a present of the Church Book. I have never had courage to buckle myself in earnest even to acknowledge it by six words. And yet I am accounted by some people a good man. How cheap that character is acquired! Pay your debts, don't borrow money, nor twist your kittens neck off, or disturb a congregation, &c.—your business is done. I know things (thoughts or things, thoughts are things) of myself which would make every friend I have fly me as a plague patient. I once * * *, and set a dog upon a crab's leg that was shoved out under a moss of sea weeds, a pretty

little feeler.—Oh ! pah ! how sick I am of that ; and a lie, a mean one, I once told !—

I stink in the midst of respect.

I am much hypt ; the fact is, my head is heavy, but there is hope, or if not, I am better than a poor shell fish—not morally when I set the whelp upon it, but have more blood and spirits ; things may turn up, and I may creep again into a decent opinion of myself. Vanity will return with sunshine. Till when, pardon my neglects and impute it to the wintry solstice. C. LAMB.

NOTE

[The motto eventually adopted for Barton's *Poetic Vigils* was from Vaughan's *Silex Scintillans* :—

> Dear night ! this world's defeat ;
> The stop to busie fools ; care's check and curb ;
> The day of spirits ; my soul's calm retreat
> Which none disturb !

"The Line of Pope." The *Dunciad*, Book I., line 94.]

LETTER 324

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. 24 March, 1824.]

DEAR B. B.—I hasten to say that if my opinion can strengthen you in your choice, it is decisive for your acceptance of what has been so handsomely offered. I can see nothing injurious to your most honourable sense. Think that you are called to a poetical Ministry—nothing worse—the Minister is worthy of the hire.—

The only objection I feel is founded on a fear that the acceptance may be a temptation to you to let fall the bone (hard as it is) which is in your mouth and must afford tolerable pickings, for the shadow of independence. You cannot propose to become independent on what the low state of interest could afford you from such a principal as you mention ; and the most graceful excuse for the acceptance, would be, that it left you free to your voluntary functions. That is the less *light* part of the scruple. It has no darker shade. I put in *darker*, because of the ambiguity of the word light, which Donne in his admirable poem on the Metempsychosis, has so ingeniously illustrated in his invocation

> Make my *dark*[1] *heavy*[2] poem, *light*[1] and *light*[2]—

where the two senses of *light* are opposed to different opposites. A

trifling criticism.—I can see no reason for any scruple then but what arises from your own interest; which is in your own power of course to solve. If you still have doubts, read over Sanderson's Cases of Conscience, and Jeremy Taylor's Ductor Dubitantium, the first a moderate Octavo, the latter a folio of 900 close pages, and when you have thoroughly digested the admirable reasons pro and con which they give for every possible Case, you will be—— just as wise as when you began. Every man is his own best Casuist; and after all, as Ephraim Smooth, in the pleasant comedy of Wild Oats, has it, "there is no harm in a Guinea." A fortiori there is less in 2000.

I therefore most sincerely congratulate with you, excepting so far as excepted above. If you have fair Prospects of adding to the Principal, cut the Bank; but in either case do not refuse an honest Service. Your heart tells you it is not offered to bribe you *from* any duty, but *to* a duty which you feel to be your vocation. Farewell heartily C. L.

NOTE

[In the memoir of Barton by Edward FitzGerald, prefixed to the *Poems and Letters*, it is stated that in this year Barton received a handsome addition to his income. "A few members of his Society, including some of the wealthier of his own family, raised £1200 among them for his benefit [not 2000 guineas, as Lamb says]. It seems that he felt some delicacy at first in accepting this munificent testimony which his own people offered to his talents." Barton had written to Lamb on the subject.

"Donne's . . . poem on the Metempsychosis." "Metempsychosis," August 16, 1601, verse 6, line 5.

"Wild Oats" was by John O'Keeffe.]

LETTER 325

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[(Early spring), 1824.]

I AM sure I cannot fill a letter, though I should disfurnish my scull to fill it. But you expect something, and shall have a Note-let. Is Sunday, not divinely speaking, but humanly and holydaysically, a blessing? Without its institution, would our rugged taskmasters have given us a leisure day, so often, think you, as once in a month? —or, if it had not been instituted, might they not have given us every 6th day? Solve me this problem. If we are to go 3 times

a day to church, why has Sunday slipped into the notion of a *Holli*day? A Holyday I grant it. The puritans, I have read in Southey's Book, knew the distinction. They made people observe Sunday rigorously, would not let a nursery maid walk out in the fields with children for recreation on that day. But *then*—they gave the people a holliday from all sorts of work every second Tuesday. This was giving to the Two Cæsars that which was *his* respective. Wise, beautiful, thoughtful, generous Legislators! Would Wilberforce give us our Tuesdays? No, d—n him. He would turn the six days into sevenths,

> And those 3 smiling seasons of the year
> Into a Russian winter.
>
> *Old Play.*

I am sitting opposite a person who is making strange distortions with the gout, which is not unpleasant—to me at least. What is the reason we do not sympathise with pain, short of some terrible Surgical operation? Hazlitt, who boldly says all he feels, avows that not only he does not pity sick people, but he hates them. I obscurely recognise his meaning. Pain is probably too selfish a consideration, too simply a consideration of self-attention. We pity poverty, loss of friends etc. more complex things, in which the Sufferers feelings are associated with others. This is a rough thought suggested by the presence of gout; I want head to extricate it and plane it. What is all this to your Letter? I felt it to be a good one, but my turn, when I write at all, is perversely to travel out of the record, so that my letters are any thing but answers. So you still want a motto? You must not take my ironical one, because your book, I take it, is too serious for it. Bickerstaff might have used it for *his* lucubrations. What do you think of (for a Title)

RELIGIO TREMULI
OR TREMEBUNDI

There is Religio-Medici and Laici.—But perhaps the volume is not quite Quakerish enough or exclusively for it—but your own VIGILS is perhaps the Best. While I have space, let me congratulate with you the return of Spring—what a Summery Spring too! all those qualms about the dog and cray-fish melt before it. I am going to be happy and *vain* again.

A hasty farewell C. LAMB.

NOTE

["Southey's Book"—*The Book of the Church.*

"Would Wilberforce give us our Tuesdays?"—William Wilberforce, the abolitionist and the principal "Puritan" of that day.

"And those 3 smiling seasons . . ." From Webster's "Duchess of Malfy." Quoted by Lamb in the *Specimens*.

"Bickerstaff"—Isaac Bickerstaff, Steele's pseudonym in *The Tatler*.

"*Religio Tremuli* or *Tremebundi*"—"The Religion of a Quaker."]

LETTER 326

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. THOMAS ALLSOP

[P.M. April 13, 1824.]

DEAR Mrs. A.—Mary begs me to say how much she regrets we can not join you to Reigate. Our reasons are—1st I have but one holyday namely Good Friday, and it is not pleasant to solicit for another, but that might have been got over. 2dly Manning is with us, soon to go away and we should not be easy in leaving him. 3dly Our school girl Emma comes to us for a few days on Thursday. 4thly and lastly, Wordsworth is returning home in about a week, and out of respect to them we should not like to absent ourselves just now. In summer I shall have a month, and if it shall suit, should like to go for a few days of it out with you both *any where*. In the mean time, with many acknowledgments etc. etc., I remain yours (both) truly, C. LAMB.

India Ho. 13 Apr.

Remember Sundays.

LETTER 327

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM HONE

[No date. April, 1824.]

DEAR Sir,—Miss Hazlitt (niece to Pygmalion) begs us to send to you *for Mr. Hardy* a parcel. I have not thank'd you for your Pamphlet, but I assure you I approve of it in all parts, only that I would have seen my Calumniators at hell, before I would have told them I was a Xtian, *tho' I am one*, I think as much as you. I hope to see you here, some day soon. The parcel is a novel which I hope Mr. H. may sell for her. I am with greatest friendliness Yours C. LAMB.

Sunday.

NOTE

["Pygmalion." A reference to Hazlitt's *Liber Amoris; or, The New Pygmalion*, 1823.

Hone's pamphlet would be his *Aspersions Answered: an Explanatory Statement to the Public at Large and Every Reader of the "Quarterly Review,"* 1824.

Here should come a note from Lamb to Thomas Hardy, dated April 24, 1824 (printed by Mr. W. C. Hazlitt in *The Lambs*), in which Lamb says that Miss Hazlitt's novel, which Mr. Hardy promised to introduce to Mr. Ridgway, the publisher, is lying at Mr. Hone's. Hardy was a bootmaker in Fleet Street.]

LETTER 328

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

May 15, 1824.

DEAR B. B.—I am oppressed with business all day, and Company all night. But I will snatch a quarter of an hour. Your recent acquisitions of the Picture and the Letter are greatly to be congratulated. I too have a picture of my father and the copy of his first love verses; but they have been mine long. Blake is a real name, I assure you, and a most extraordinary man, if he be still living. He is the Robert [William] Blake, whose wild designs accompany a splendid folio edition of the "Night Thoughts," which you may have seen, in one of which he pictures the parting of soul and body by a solid mass of human form floating off, God knows how, from a lumpish mass (fac Simile to itself) left behind on the dying bed. He paints in water colours marvellous strange pictures, visions of his brain, which he asserts that he has seen. They have great merit. He has *seen* the old Welsh bards on Snowdon—he has seen the Beautifullest, the strongest, and the Ugliest Man, left alone from the Massacre of the Britons by the Romans, and has painted them from memory (I have seen his paintings), and asserts them to be as good as the figures of Raphael and Angelo, but not better, as they had precisely the same retro-visions and prophetic visions with themself [himself]. The painters in oil (which he will have it that neither of them practised) he affirms to have been the ruin of art, and affirms that all the while he was engaged in his Water paintings, Titian was disturbing him, Titian the Ill Genius of Oil Painting. His Pictures—one in particular, the Canterbury

Pilgrims (far above Stothard's)—have great merit, but hard, dry, yet with grace. He has written a Catalogue of them with a most spirited criticism on Chaucer, but mystical and full of Vision. His poems have been sold hitherto only in Manuscript. I never read them; but a friend at my desire procured the "Sweep Song." There is one to a tiger, which I have heard recited, beginning—

> "Tiger, Tiger, burning bright,
> Thro' the desarts of the night,"

which is glorious, but, alas! I have not the book; for the man is flown, whither I know not—to Hades or a Mad House. But I must look on him as one of the most extraordinary persons of the age. Montgomery's book I have not much hope from. The Society, with the affected name, has been labouring at it for these 20 years, and made few converts. I think it was injudicious to mix stories avowedly colour'd by fiction with the sad true statements from the parliamentary records, etc., but I wish the little Negroes all the good that can come from it. I batter'd my brains (not butter'd them—but it is a bad *a*) for a few verses for them, but I could make nothing of it. You have been luckier. But Blake's are the flower of the set, you will, I am sure, agree, tho' some of Montgomery's at the end are pretty; but the Dream awkwardly paraphras'd from B.

With the exception of an Epilogue for a Private Theatrical, I have written nothing now for near 6 months. It is in vain to spur me on. I must wait. I cannot write without a genial impulse, and I have none. 'Tis barren all and dearth. No matter; life is something without scribbling. I have got rid of my bad spirits, and hold up pretty well this rain-damn'd May.

So we have lost another Poet. I never much relished his Lordship's mind, and shall be sorry if the Greeks have cause to miss him. He was to me offensive, and I never can make out his great *power*, which his admirers talk of. Why, a line of Wordsworth's is a lever to lift the immortal spirit! Byron can only move the Spleen. He was at best a Satyrist,—in any other way he was mean enough. I dare say I do him injustice; but I cannot love him, nor squeeze a tear to his memory. He did not like the world, and he has left it, as Alderman Curtis advised the Radicals, "If they don't like their country, damn 'em, let 'em leave it," they possessing no rood of ground in England, and he 10,000 acres. Byron was better than many Curtises.

Farewell, and accept this apology for a letter from one who owes you so much in that kind.

Yours ever truly, C. L.

NOTE

[Lamb's portrait of his father is reproduced in Vol. II. of this edition, opposite page 368. The first love verses are no more.

William Blake was at this time sixty-six years of age. He was living in poverty and neglect at 3 Fountain Court, Strand. Blake made 537 illustrations to Young's *Night Thoughts*, of which only forty-seven were published. Lamb is, however, thinking of his edition of Blair's *Grave*. I give the picture on the opposite page. The exhibition of his works was held in 1809, and it was for this that Blake wrote the descriptive catalogue. Lamb had sent Blake's "Sweep Song," which, like "Tiger, Tiger," is in the *Songs of Innocence*, to James Montgomery for his *Chimney-Sweepers' Friend and Climbing Boys' Album*, 1824, a little book designed to ameliorate the lot of those children, in whose interest a society existed. Barton also contributed something. It was Blake's poem which had excited Barton's curiosity. Probably he thought that Lamb wrote it. Lamb's mistake concerning Blake's name is curious, in so far as that it was Blake's brother Robert, who died in 1787, who in a vision revealed to the poet the method by which the *Songs of Innocence* were to be reproduced.

"The Dream awkwardly paraphras'd from B." The book ended with three "Climbing-Boys' Soliloquies" by Montgomery. The second was a dream in which the dream in Blake's song was extended and prosified.

"An Epilogue for a Private Theatrical." Probably the epilogue for the amateur performance of "Richard II.," given by the family of Henry Field, Barron Field's father (see Vol. V. of the present edition, page 128).

"Another great Poet." Byron died on April 19, 1824.

"Alderman Curtis." See note on page 430.]

LETTER 329

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

July 7th, 1824.

DEAR B. B.—I have been suffering under a severe inflammation of the eyes, notwithstanding which I resolutely went through your very pretty volume at once, which I dare pronounce in no ways inferior to former lucubrations. "*Abroad*" and "*lord*" are vile rhymes notwithstanding, and if you count you will

"DEATH OF THE STRONG WICKED MAN"

PLATE FROM BLAIR'S *GRAVE* DESIGNED BY WILLIAM BLAKE

wonder how many times you have repeated the word *unearthly*—thrice in one poem. It is become a slang word with the bards; avoid it in future lustily. "Time" is fine; but there are better a good deal, I think. The volume does not lie by me; and, after a long day's smarting fatigue, which has almost put out my eyes (not blind however to your merits), I dare not trust myself with long writing. The verses to Bloomfield are the sweetest in the collection. Religion is sometimes lugged in, as if it did not come naturally. I will go over carefully when I get my seeing, and exemplify. You have also too much of singing metre, such as requires no deep ear to make; lilting measure, in which you have done Woolman injustice. Strike at less superficial melodies. The piece on Nayler is more to my fancy.

My eye runs waters. But I will give you a fuller account some day. The book is a very pretty one in more than one sense. The decorative harp, perhaps, too ostentatious; a simple pipe preferable.

Farewell, and many thanks. C. LAMB.

NOTE

[Barton's new book was *Poetic Vigils*, 1824. It contained among other poems "An Ode to Time," "Verses to the Memory of Bloomfield" (see Letter 311), "A Memorial of John Woolman," beginning—

There is glory to me in thy Name,
  Meek follower of Bethlehem's Child,
More touching by far than the splendour of Fame
  With which the vain world is beguil'd,

and "A Memorial of James Nayler." The following "Sonnet to Elia," from the *London Magazine*, is also in the volume: it is odd that Lamb did not mention it:—

SONNET TO ELIA

Delightful Author! unto whom I owe
  Moments and moods of fancy and of feeling,
  Afresh to grateful memory now appealing,
Fain would I "bless thee—ere I let thee go!"
From month to month has the exhaustless flow
  Of thy original mind, its wealth revealing,
  With quaintest humour, and deep pathos healing
The World's rude wounds, revived Life's early glow:
And, mixt with this, at times, to earnest thought,
  Glimpses of truth, most simple and sublime,
By thy imagination have been brought
  Over my spirit. From the olden time
Of authorship thy patent should be dated,
  And thou with Marvell, Brown, and Burton mated.]

LETTER 330

CHARLES LAMB TO W. MARTER

[Dated at end: July 19 (1824).]

DEAR Marter,—I have just rec^d your letter, having returned from a month's holydays. My exertions for the London are, tho' not dead, in a dead sleep for the present. If your club like scandal, Blackwood's is your magazine; if you prefer light articles, and humorous without offence, the New Monthly is very amusing. The best of it is by Horace Smith, the author of the Rejected Addresses. The Old Monthly has more of matter, information, but not so merry. I cannot safely recommend any others, as not knowing them, or knowing them to their disadvantage. Of Reviews, beside what you mention, I know of none except the Review on Hounslow Heath, which I take it is too expensive for your ordering. Pity me, that have been a Gentleman these four weeks, and am reduced in one day to the state of a ready writer. I feel, I feel, my gentlemanly qualities fast oozing away—such as a sense of honour, neckcloths twice a day, abstinence from swearing, &c. The desk enters into my soul.

See my thoughts on business next Page.

SONNET

Who first invented *work?*—and bound the free
And holyday-rejoicing Spirit down
To the ever-haunting importunity
Of *Business* in the green fields, and the Town—
To plough, loom, [anvil], spade, and (oh most sad!)
To this dry drudgery of the desk's dead wood?
Who but the Being unblest, alien from good,
Sabbathless Satan! He, who his unglad
Task ever plies 'mid rotatory burnings,
That round and round incalculably reel—
For wrath divine hath made him like a wheel—
In that red realm from whence are no returnings;
Where toiling & turmoiling ever & aye
He and his Thoughts keep pensive worky-day.

With many recollections of pleasanter times, my old compeer, happily released before me, Adieu. C. LAMB.

E. I. H.
19 July [1824].

NOTE

[Marter was an old India House clerk; we do not meet with him again. The sonnet had been printed in *The Examiner* in 1819. Lamb, who was fond of it, reprinted it in *Album Verses*, 1830.]

LETTER 331

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN BATES DIBDIN

[P.M. July 28, 1824.]

MY dear Sir—I must appear negligent in not having thanked you for the very pleasant books you sent me. Arthur, and the Novel, we have both of us read with unmixed satisfaction. They are full of quaint conceits, and running over with good humour and good nature. I naturally take little interest in story, but in these the manner and not the end is the interest; it is such pleasant travelling, one scarce cares whither it leads us. Pray express our pleasure to your father with my best thanks.

I am involved in a routine of visiting among the family of Barron Field, just ret^d^. from Botany Bay—I shall hardly have an open Evening before Tuesday next. Will you come to us then?

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

Wensday
28 July 24.

NOTE

[*Arthur* and the Novel were two books by Charles Dibdin the Younger, the father of Lamb's correspondent. Arthur was *Young Arthur; or, The Child of Mystery: A Metrical Romance*, 1819, and the novel was *Isn't It Odd?* three volumes of high-spirited ramblings something in the manner of *Tristram Shandy*, nominally written by Marmaduke Merrywhistle, and published in 1822.

Barron Field had returned from his Judgeship in New South Wales on June 18.]

LETTER 332

(Possibly incomplete)

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS HOOD

P.M. August 10, 1824.

AND what dost thou at the Priory? *Cucullus non facit Monachum.* English me that, and challenge old Lignum Janua to make a better.

My old New River has presented no extraordinary novelties lately; but there Hope sits every day, speculating upon traditionary gudgeons. I think she has taken the fisheries. I now

know the reason why our forefathers were denominated East and West Angles. Yet is there no lack of spawn; for I wash my hands in fishets that come through the pump every morning thick as motelings;—little things o o o like *that*, that perish untimely, and never taste the brook. You do not tell me of those romantic land bays that be as thou goest to Lover's Seat: neither of that little churchling in the midst of a wood (in the opposite direction, nine furlongs from the town), that seems dropped by the Angel that was tired of carrying two packages; marry, with the other he made shift to pick his flight to Loretto. Inquire out, and see my little Protestant Loretto. It stands apart from trace of human habitation; yet hath it pulpit, reading-desk, and trim front of massiest marble, as if Robinson Crusoe had reared it to soothe himself with old church-going images. I forget its Christian name, and what she-saint was its gossip.

You should also go to No. 13, Standgate Street,—a baker, who has the finest collection of marine monsters in ten sea counties,—sea dragons, polypi, mer-people, most fantastic. You have only to name the old gentleman in black (not the Devil) that lodged with him a week (he'll remember) last July, and he will show courtesy. He is by far the foremost of the savans. His wife is the funniest thwarting little animal! They are decidedly the Lions of green Hastings. Well, I have made an end of my say. My epistolary time is gone by when I could have scribbled as long (I will not say as agreeable) as thine was to both of us. I am dwindled to notes and letterets. But, in good earnest, I shall be most happy to hail thy return to the waters of Old Sir Hugh. There is nothing like inland murmurs, fresh ripples, and our native minnows.

> "He sang in meads how sweet the brooklets ran,
> To the rough ocean and red restless sands."

I design to give up smoking; but I have not yet fixed upon the equivalent vice. I must have *quid pro quo;* or *quo pro quid*, as Tom Woodgate would correct me. My service to him. C. L.

Note

[This is the first letter to Hood, then a young man of twenty-five, and assistant editor of the *London Magazine*. He was now staying at Hastings, on his honeymoon, presumably, like the Lambs, near the Priory (see note on page 615).

"*Cucullus non facit Monachum*"—"The cowl does not make the monk," an old proverb quoted more than once by Shakespeare.

"Old Lignum Janua"—the Tom Woodgate mentioned at the end of the letter, a boatman at Hastings. Hood wrote some verses to him.

"My old New River." This passage was placed by Hood as the motto of his verses "Walton Redivivus," in *Whims and Oddities*, 1826.

"Little churchling." This is Lamb's second description of Hollingdon Rural. The third and best is on page 709.

"Loretto." The legend is that the house of the Virgin Mary at Nazareth was carried by an angel to Macerata, in Italy, and deposited on the property of the Lady Loretto.

"Waters of Old Sir Hugh"—the New River, stream of Sir Hugh Middleton.

"There is nothing like inland murmurs." Lamb is here remembering Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey lines :—

> With a sweet inland murmur.

In the *Elia* essay "The Old Margate Hoy" Lamb, in speaking of Hastings, had made the same objection.

"He sang in meads . . ." An imperfect memory of Landor's lines in *Gebir*, also referred to in the same essay :—

> In smiling meads how sweet the brook's repose
> To the rough ocean, and red restless sands.

In a letter to his sister, written from Hastings at this time, Hood says :—

This is the last of our excursions. We have tried, but in vain, to find out the baker and his wife recommended to us by Lamb as the very lions of green Hastings. There is no such street as he has named throughout the town, and the ovens are singularly numerous. We have given up the search, therefore, but we have discovered the little church in the wood, and it is such a church! It ought to have been our St. Botolph's. . . . Such a verdant covert wood Stothard might paint for the haunting of Dioneus, Pamphillus, and Fiammetta as they walk in the novel of Boccacce. The ground shadowed with bluebells, even to the formation of a plumb-like bloom upon its little knolls and ridges; and ever through the dell windeth a little path chequered with the shades of aspens and ashes and the most verdant and lively of all the family of trees. Here a broad, rude stone steppeth over a lazy spring, oozing its way into grass and weeds; anon a fresh pathway divergeth, you know not whither. Meanwhile the wild blackbird startles across the way and singeth anew in some other shade. To have seen Fiammetta there, stepping in silk attire, like a flower, and the sunlight looking upon her betwixt the branches! I had not walked (in the body) with Romance before. Then suppose so much of a space cleared as maketh a small church *lawn* to be sprinkled with old gravestones, and in the midst the church itself, a small Christian dovecot, such as Lamb has truly described it, like a little temple of Juan Fernandes. I could have been sentimental and wished to lie some day in that place, its calm tenants seeming to come through such quiet ways, through those verdant alleys, to their graves.

In coming home I killed a viper in our serpentine path, and Mrs. Fernor says I am by that token to overcome an enemy. Is Taylor or Hessey dead? The reptile was dark and dull, his blood being yet sluggish from the cold; howbeit, he tried to bite, till I cut him in two with a stone. I thought of Hessey's long backbone when I did it.

They are called *adders*, tell your father, because two and two of them together make four.]

LETTER 333

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES ABRAHAM ELTON

India House
to which place all letters addressed
to C. L. commonly come.

[August 17, 1824 (?).]

MY dear Sir, You have overwhelmed me with your favours. I have received positively a little library from Baldwyn's. I do not know how I have deserved such a bounty.

We have been up to the ear in the classics ever since it came. I have been greatly pleased, but most, I think, with the Hesiod,—the Titan battle quite amazed me. Gad, it was no child's play—and then the homely aphorisms at the end of the works—how adroitly you have turned them! Can he be the same Hesiod who did the Titans? the latter is —

"——wine
Which to madness does incline."

But to read the Days and Works, is like eating nice brown bread, homely sweet and nutritive. Apollonius was new to me. I had confounded him with the conjuror of that name. Medea is glorious; but I cannot give up Dido. She positively is the only Fine Lady of Antiquity: her courtesy to the Trojans is altogether queen-like. Eneas is a most disagreeable person. Ascanius a pretty young master. Mezentius for my money. His dying speech shames Turpin—not the Archbishop I mean, but the roadster of that name.

I have been ashamed to find how many names of classics (and more than their names) you have introduced me to, that before I was ignorant of. Your commendation of Master Chapman arrideth me. Can any one read the pert modern Frenchify'd notes, &c., in Pope's translation, and contrast them with solemn weighty prefaces of Chapman, writing in full faith, as he evidently does, of the plenary inspiration of his author—worshipping his meanest scraps and relics as divine—without one sceptical misgiving of their authenticity, and doubt which was the properest to expound Homer to their countrymen. Reverend Chapman! you have read his hymn to Pan (the Homeric)—why, it is Milton's blank verse clothed with rhyme. Paradise Lost could scarce lose, could it be so accoutred.

I shall die in the belief that he has improved upon Homer, in the Odyssey in particular—the disclosure of Ulysses of himself, to

Alcinous, his previous behaviour at the song of the stern strife arising between Achilles and himself (how it raises him above the *Iliad* Ulysses!) but you know all these things quite as well as I do. But what a deaf ear old C. would have turned to the doubters in Homer's real personality! They might as well have denied the appearance of J. C. in the flesh.—He apparently believed all the fables of H.'s birth, &c.

Those notes of Bryant have caused the greatest disorder in my brain-pan. Well, I will not flatter when I say that we have had two or three long evening's *good reading* out of your kind present.

I will say nothing of the tenderest parts in your own little volume, at the end of such a slatternly scribble as this, but indeed they cost us some tears. I scrawl away because of interruptions every moment. You guess how it is in a busy office—papers thrust into your hand when your hand is busiest—and every anti-classical disavocation. [*Conclusion cut away.*]

NOTE

[This letter, now for the first time printed in full, may be here wrongly placed. Lady Elton thinks the postmark to be 1824. It is, however, one of those letters whose date matters little.

There is a reference to Elton in the note on page 558 to Letter 262; and again, as the author of a witty remark upon Coleridge, in Letter 358. Elton seems to have sent Lamb a number of his books, principally his *Specimens of the Classical Poets . . . from Homer to Tryphiodorus translated into English Verse*, Baldwin, 1814, in three volumes. Lamb refers first to the passage from Hesiod's *Theogony*, and then to his *Works and Days* (which Chapman translated)—"Dispensation of Providence to the Just and Unjust."

"Which to madness does incline." I do not find this.

Apollonius Rhodius was the author of *The Argonautics*. Lamb then passes on to Virgil. For the death of Mezentius see the *Æneid*, Book X., at the end. The makers of broadsides had probably credited Dick Turpin with a dying speech.

"Those notes of Bryant." Lamb possibly refers to Jacob Bryant's *Essay on the Original Genius and Writings of Homer*, 1775, or his pamphlet on the Trojan War, 1795, 1799.

"Your own little volume." Probably *The Brothers and Other Poems*, by Elton, 1820.]

LETTER 334

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. August 17, 1824.]

DEAR B. B.—I congratulate you on getting a house over your head. I find the comfort of it I am sure. At my town lodgings the Mistress was always quarrelling with our maid; and at my place of rustication, the whole family were always beating one another, brothers beating sisters (one a most beautiful girl lamed for life), father beating sons and daughters, and son again beating his father, knocking him fairly down, a scene I never before witnessed, but was called out of bed by the unnatural blows, the parricidal colour of which, tho' my morals could not but condemn, yet my reason did heartily approve, and in the issue the house was quieter for a day or so than I had ever known. I am now all harmony and quiet, even to the sometimes wishing back again some of the old rufflings. There is something stirring in these civil broils.

The Album shall be attended to. If I can light upon a few appropriate rhymes (but rhymes come with difficulty from me now) I shall beg a place in the neat margin of your young housekeeper.

The Prometheus Unbound, is a capital story. The Literal rogue! What if you had ordered Elfrida in *sheets!* She'd have been sent up, I warrant you. Or bid him clasp his bible (*i.e.* to his bosom)—he'd ha clapt on a brass clasp, no doubt.—

I can no more understand Shelly than you can. His poetry is "thin sewn with profit or delight." Yet I must point to your notice a sonnet conceivd and expressed with a witty delicacy. It is that addressed to one who hated him, but who could not persuade him to hate *him* again. His coyness to the other's passion (for hate demands a return as much as Love, and starves without it) is most arch and pleasant. Pray, like it very much.

For his theories and nostrums they are oracular enough, but I either comprehend 'em not, or there is miching malice and mischief in 'em. But for the most part ringing with their own emptiness. Hazlitt said well of 'em—Many are wiser and better for reading Shakspeare, but nobody was ever wiser or better for reading Sh—y.

I wonder you will sow your correspondence on so barren a ground as I am, that make such poor returns. But my head akes at the bare thought of letter writing. I wish all the ink in the ocean dried up, and would listen to the quills shivering [?shrivelling] up in the candle flame, like parching martyrs. The same indisposit^{n}

to write it is has stopt my Elias, but you will see a futile Effort in the next No., "wrung from me with slow pain."

The fact is, my head is seldom cool enough. I am dreadfully indolent. To have to do anything—to order me a new coat, for instance, tho' my old buttons are shelled like beans—is an effort.

My pen stammers like my tongue. What cool craniums those old enditers of Folios must have had. What a mortify'd pulse. Well, once more I throw myself on your mercy—Wishing peace in thy new dwelling— C. LAMB.

NOTE

[The Lambs gave up their "country lodgings" at Dalston on moving to Colebrooke Row.

"The album." See next letter to Barton.

"The Prometheus Unbound." A bookseller, asked for *Prometheus Unbound*, Shelley's poem, had replied that *Prometheus* was not to be had "in sheets." *Elfrida* was a dramatic poem by William Mason, Gray's friend.

"Thin sewn with profit . . ." From *Paradise Regained*, IV., 345 :—

Thin sown with aught of profit or delight.

This is Shelley's poem (not a sonnet) which Lamb liked :—

LINES TO A REVIEWER

Alas! good friend, what profit can you see
In hating such an hateless thing as me?
There is no sport in hate, where all the rage
Is on one side. In vain would you assuage
Your frowns upon an unresisting smile,
In which not even contempt lurks, to beguile
Your heart by some faint sympathy of hate.
Oh conquer what you cannot satiate!
For to your passion I am far more coy
Than ever yet was coldest maid or boy
In winter-noon. Of your antipathy
If I am the Narcissus, you are free
To pine into a sound with hating me.

"Miching malice"—"Miching mallecho" ("Hamlet," III., 2, 147).

Hazlitt writes of Shelley in his essay "On Paradox and Commonplace" in *Table Talk;* but he does not make this remark there. Perhaps he said it in conversation.

"The next Number." The "futile Effort" was "Blakesmoor in H——shire" in the *London Magazine* for September, 1824.

"Wrung from me with slow pain." Polonius says of his permission for Laertes to travel :—

> He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave.
> "Hamlet," I., 2, 58.

Here should come a note from Lamb to Cary, August 19, 1824, in which Lamb thanks him for his translation of *The Birds* of Aristophanes and accepts an invitation to dine.]

LETTER 335

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[Dated at end: September 30, 1824.]

Little Book! surnam'd of White;
Clean, as yet, and fair to sight;
Keep thy attribution right.

Never disproportion'd scrawl;
Ugly blot, that's worse than all;
On thy maiden clearness fall.

In each Letter, here design'd,
Let the Reader emblem'd find
Neatness of the Owner's mind.

Gilded margins count a sin;
Let thy leaves attraction win
By the Golden Rules within:

Sayings, fetch'd from Sages old;
Saws, which Holy Writ unfold,
Worthy to be writ in Gold:

Lighter Fancies not excluding;
Blameless wit, with nothing rude in,
Sometimes mildly interluding

Amid strains of graver measure:—
Virtue's self hath oft her pleasure
In sweet Muses' groves of leisure.

Riddles dark, perplexing sense;
Darker meanings of offence;
What but *shades*, be banish'd hence.

Whitest Thoughts, in whitest dress—
Candid Meanings—best express
Mind of quiet Quakeress.

DEAR B. B.—"I am ill at these numbers;" but if the above be not too mean to have a place in thy Daughter's Sanctum, take them with pleasure. I assume that her Name is Hannah, because it is a pretty scriptural cognomen. I began on another

sheet of paper, and just as I had penn'd the second line of Stanza 2 an ugly Blot [*here is a blot*] as big as this, fell, to illustrate my counsel.—I am sadly given to blot, and modern blotting-paper gives no redress; it only smears and makes it worse, as for example [*here is a smear*]. The only remedy is scratching out, which gives it a Clerkish look. The most innocent blots are made with red ink, and are rather ornamental. [*Here are two or three blots in red ink.*] Marry, they are not always to be distinguished from the effusions of a cut finger.

Well, I hope and trust thy Tick doleru, or however you spell it, is vanished, for I have frightful impressions of that Tick, and do altogether hate it, as an unpaid score, or the Tick of a Death Watch. I take it to be a species of Vitus's dance (I omit the Sanctity, writing to "one of the men called Friends"). I knew a young Lady who could dance no other, she danced thro' life, and very queer and fantastic were her steps. Heaven bless thee from such measures, and keep thee from the Foul Fiend, who delights to lead after False Fires in the night, Flibbertigibit, that gives the web and the pin &c. I forget what else.—

From my den, as Bunyan has it, 30 Sep. 24. C. L.

NOTE

[The verses were for the album of Barton's daughter, Lucy (afterwards Mrs. Edward FitzGerald). Lucy was her only name. Lamb afterwards printed them in his *Album Verses*, 1830.

"I am ill at these numbers" ("Hamlet," II., 2, 120). Lamb later came to pride himself on his facility as a rhymester to ladies' order.

"The Foul Fiend . . . Flibbertigibit." See "Lear," III., 4, 120. "False Fires." See "Hamlet," III., 2, 277.]

LETTER 336

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. JOHN DYER COLLIER

[Dated at end: November 2, 1824.]

DEAR Mrs. Collier—We receive so much pig from your kindness, that I really have not phrase enough to vary successive acknowledg^mts.

I think I shall get a printed form to serve on all occasions.

To say it was young, crisp, short, luscious, dainty-toed, is but to say what all its predecessors have been. It was eaten on Sunday

and Monday, and doubts only exist as to which temperature it eat best, hot or cold. I incline to the latter. The Petty-feet made a pretty surprising præ-gustation for supper on Saturday night, just as I was loathingly in expectation of bren-cheese. I spell as I speak.

I do not know what news to send you. You will have heard of Alsager's death, and your Son John's success in the Lottery. I say he is a wise man, if he leaves off while he is well. The weather is wet to weariness, but Mary goes puddling about a-shopping after a gown for the winter. She wants it good & cheap. Now I hold that no good things are cheap, pig-presents always excepted. In this mournful weather I sit moping, where I now write, in an office dark as Erebus, jammed in between 4 walls, and writing by Candle-light, most melancholy. Never see the light of the Sun six hours in the day, and am surprised to find how pretty it shines on Sundays. I wish I were a Caravan driver or a Penny post man, to earn my bread in air & sunshine. Such a pedestrian as I am, to be tied by the legs, like a Fauntleroy, without the pleasure of his Exactions. I am interrupted here with an official question, which will take me up till it's time to go to dinner, so with repeated thanks & both our kindest remembces to Mr. Collier & yourself, I conclude in haste.

Yours & his sincerely, C. Lamb.

from my den in Leadenhall,
2 Nov. 24.

On further enquiry Alsager is not dead, but Mrs. A. is brot. to bed.

Note

[Mrs. Collier was the mother of John Payne Collier. Alsager we have already met. Henry Fauntleroy was the banker, who had just been found guilty of forgery and on the day that Lamb wrote was sentenced to death. He was executed on the 30th (see Letter 341).]

LETTER 337

CHARLES LAMB TO B. W. PROCTER

[Dated at end: November 11, '24.]

My dear Procter,—

I do agnise a shame in not having been to pay my congratulations to Mrs. Procter and your happy self, but on Sunday (my only morning) I was engaged to a country walk; and in virtue of the hypostatical union between us, when Mary calls, it is understood that I call too, we being univocal.

But indeed I am ill at these ceremonious inductions. I fancy I was not born with a call on my head, though I have brought one down upon it with a vengeance. I love not to pluck that sort of fruit crude, but to stay its ripening into visits. In probability Mary will be at Southampton Row this morning, and something of that kind be matured between you, but in any case not many hours shall elapse before I shake you by the hand.

Meantime give my kindest felicitations to Mrs. Procter, and assure her I look forward with the greatest delight to our acquaintance. By the way, the deuce a bit of Cake has come to hand, which hath an inauspicious look at first, but I comfort myself that that Mysterious Service hath the property of Sacramental Bread, which mice cannot nibble, nor time moulder.

I am married myself—to a severe step-wife, who keeps me, not at bed and board, but at desk and board, and is jealous of my morning aberrations. I can not slip out to congratulate kinder unions. It is well she leaves me alone o' nights—the damn'd Day-hag *BUSINESS*. She is even now peeping over me to see I am writing no Love Letters. I come, my dear—Where is the Indigo Sale Book?

Twenty adieus, my dear friends, till we meet.

Yours most truly, C. LAMB.

Leadenhall, 11 Nov. '24.

NOTE

[Procter married Anne Skepper, stepdaughter of Basil Montagu, in October, 1824. One of their daughters was Adelaide Ann Procter.

"Agnise"—acknowledge. It has been suggested that Lamb favoured this old word also on account of its superficial association with *agnus*, a lamb.]

LETTER 338

CHARLES LAMB TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

[P.M. Nov. 20, 1824.]

DR R. Barron Field bids me say that he is resident at his brother Henry's, a surgeon &c., a few doors west of Christ Church Passage Newgate Street; and that he shall be happy to accompany you up thence to Islington, when next you come our way, but not so late as you sometimes come. I think we shall be out on Tuesdy.

Yours ever

C. LAMB.

Saty.

NOTE

[Barron Field, as I have said, had returned from New South Wales in June of this year. Later he became Chief Justice at Gibraltar.]

LETTER 339

CHARLES LAMB TO SARAH HUTCHINSON

Desk 11, Nov. 25 [1824].

MY dear Miss Hutchinson, Mary bids me thank you for your kind letter. We are a little puzzled about your whereabouts: Miss Wordsworth writes Torkay, and you have queerly made it Torquay. Now Tokay we have heard of, and Torbay, which we take to be the true *male* spelling of the place, but somewhere we fancy it to be on "Devon's leafy shores," where we heartily wish the kindly breezes may restore all that is invalid among you. Robinson is returned, and speaks much of you all. We shall be most glad to hear good news from you from time to time. The best is, Proctor is at last married. We have made sundry attempts to see the Bride, but have accidentally failed, she being gone out a gadding.

We had promised our dear friends the Monkhouses, promised ourselves rather, a visit to them at Ramsgate, but I thought it best, and Mary seemed to have it at heart too, not to go far from home these last holy days. It is connected with a sense of unsettlement, and secretly I know she hoped that such abstinence would be friendly to her health. She certainly has escaped her sad yearly visitation, whether in consequence of it, or of faith in it, and we have to be thankful for a good 1824. To get such a notion into our heads may go a great way another year. Not that we quite confined ourselves; but assuming Islington to be head quarters, we made timid flights to Ware, Watford &c. to try how the trouts tasted, for a night out or so, not long enough to make the sense of change oppressive, but sufficient to scour the rust of home.

Coleridge is not returned from the Sea. As a little scandal may divert you recluses—we were in the Summer dining at a Clergyman of Southey's "Church of England," at Hertford, the same who officiated to Thurtell's last moments, and indeed an old contemporary Blue of C.'s and mine at School. After dinner we talked of C., and F. who is a mighty good fellow in the main, but hath his cassock prejudices, inveighed against the moral character of C. I endeavoured to enlighten him on the subject, till having driven him out of some

of his holds, he stopt my mouth at once by appealing to me whether it was not very well known that C. "at that very moment was living in a state of open a———y with Mrs. * * * * * * at Highgate?" Nothing I could say serious or bantering after that could remove the deep inrooted conviction of the whole company assembled that such was the case! Of course you will keep this quite close, for I would not involve my poor blundering friend, who I dare say believed it all thoroughly. My interference of course was imputed to the goodness of my heart, that could imagine nothing wrong &c. Such it is if Ladies will go gadding about with other people's husbands at watering places. How careful we should be to avoid the appearance of Evil. I thought this Anecdote might amuse you. It is not worth resenting seriously; only I give it as a specimen of orthodox candour. O Southey, Southey, how long would it be before you would find one of us *Unitarians* propagating such unwarrantable Scandal! Providence keep you all from the foul fiend Scandal, and send you back well and happy to dear Gloster Place. C. L.

NOTE

[Addressed to "Miss Hutchinson, T. Monkhouse Esqre. Strand, Torkay, Torbay, Devon."

Thomas Monkhouse, who was in a decline, had been ordered to Torquay.

"Devon's leafy shores." From *The Excursion*, Book III., line 518.

Crabb Robinson had been in Normandy for some weeks.

The too credulous clergyman at Hertford was Frederick William Franklin, Master of the Blue Coat school there (from 1801 to 1827), who was at Christ's Hospital with Lamb.

"Mrs. * * * * * *." Mrs. Gillman.]

LETTER 340

CHARLES LAMB TO LEIGH HUNT

[No date. ? November, 1824.]

ILLUSTREZZIMO Signor,—I have obeyed your mandate to a tittle. I accompany this with a volume. But what have you done with the first I sent you?—have you swapt it with some lazzaroni for macaroni? or pledged it with a gondolierer for a passage? Peradventuri the Cardinal Gonsalvi took a fancy to it:—his Eminence

has done my Nearness an honour. 'Tis but a step to the Vatican. As you judge, my works do not enrich the workman, but I get vat I can for 'em. They keep dragging me on, a poor, worn mill-horse, in the eternal round of the damn'd magazine; but 'tis they are blind, not I. Colburn (where I recognise with delight the gay W. Honeycomb renovated) hath the ascendency.

I was with the Novellos last week. They have a large, cheap house and garden, with a dainty library (magnificent) without books. But what will make you bless yourself (I am too old for wonder), something has touched the right organ in Vincentio at last. He attends a Wesleyan chapel on Kingsland Green. He at first tried to laugh it off—he only went for the singing; but the cloven foot—I retract—the Lamb's trotters—are at length apparent. Mary Isabella attributes it to a lightness induced by his headaches. But I think I see in it a less accidental influence. Mister Clark is at perfect staggers! the whole fabric of his infidelity is shaken. He has no one to join him in his coarse-insults and indecent obstreperousnesses against Christianity, for Holmes (the bonny Holmes) is gone to Salisbury to be organist, and Isabella and the Clark make but a feeble quorum. The children have all nice, neat little clasped pray-books, and I have laid out 7s. 8d. in Watts's Hymns for Christmas presents for them. The eldest girl alone holds out; she has been at Boulogne, skirting upon the vast focus of Atheism, and imported bad principles in patois French. But the strongholds are crumbling. N. appears as yet to have but a confused notion of the Atonement. It makes him giddy, he says, to think much about it. But such giddiness is spiritual sobriety.

Well, Byron is gone, and —— is now the best poet in England. Fill up the gap to your fancy. Barry Cornwall has at last carried the pretty A. S. They are just in the treacle-moon. Hope it won't clog his wings—gaum we used to say at school.

Mary, my sister, has worn me out with eight weeks' cold and toothache, her average complement in the winter, and it will not go away. She is otherwise well, and reads novels all day long. She has had an exempt year, a good year, for which, forgetting the minor calamity, she and I are most thankful.

Alsager is in a flourishing house, with wife and children about him, in Mecklenburg Square—almost too fine to visit.

Barron Field is come home from Sydney, but as yet I can hear no tidings of a pension. He is plump and friendly, his wife really a very superior woman. He resumes the bar.

I have got acquainted with Mr. Irving, the Scotch preacher, whose fame must have reached you. He is a humble disciple at the foot of Gamaliel S. T. C. Judge how his own sectarists must stare when I tell you he has dedicated a book to S. T. C.,

acknowledging to have learnt more of the nature of Faith, Christianity, and Christian Church, from him than from all the men he ever conversed with. He is a most amiable, sincere, modest man in a room, this Boanerges in the temple. Mrs. Montague told him the dedication would do him no good. "That shall be a reason for doing it," was his answer. Judge, now, whether this man be a quack.

Dear H., take this imperfect notelet for a letter; it looks so much the more like conversing on nearer terms. Love to all the Hunts, old friend Thornton, and all.

Yours ever, C. LAMB.

NOTE

[Leigh Hunt was still living at Genoa. Shelley and Byron, whom he had left England to join, were both dead. Lamb, I assume, sent him a second copy of *Elia* with this letter.

Cardinal Gonsalvi was Ercole Consalvi (1757-1824), secretary to Pius VII. and a patron of the arts. Lawrence painted him.

For the present state of the *London Magazine* see next letter. Leigh Hunt contributed to Colburn's *New Monthly Magazine*, among other things, a series of papers on "The Months," in which under March is to be found the little passage on London Fogs which I—not alone in the error—have included in Vol. I. as by Lamb (on Ayrton's authority). Hunt also contributed an account of the Honeycomb family, by Harry Honeycomb.

By Mary Isabella Lamb meant Mary Sabilla Novello, Vincent Novello's wife. The eldest girl was Mary Victoria, afterwards the wife of Charles Cowden Clarke, the Mr. Clark mentioned here. Novello (now living at Shackleford Green) remained a good Roman Catholic to the end. Holmes was Edward Holmes (1797-1859), a pupil of Cowden Clarke's father at Enfield and schoolfellow of Keats. He had lived with the Novellos, studying music, and later became a musical writer and teacher and the biographer of Mozart.

Mrs. Barron Field was a Miss Jane Carncroft, to whom Lamb addressed some album verses (see Vol. V. of this edition, page 93). Leigh Hunt knew of Field's return, for he had contributed to the *New Monthly* earlier in the year a rhymed letter to him in which he welcomed him home again.

Irving was Edward Irving (1792-1834), afterwards the founder of the Catholic Apostolic sect, then drawing people to the chapel in Hatton Garden, attached to the Caledonian Asylum. The dedication, to which Lamb alludes more than once in his correspondence, was that of his work, *For Missionaries after the Apostolical School, a series of orations in four parts, ...* 1825. It runs:—

DEDICATION

TO

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, Esq.

My dear and honoured friend,

Unknown as you are, in the true character either of your mind or of your heart, to the greater part of your countrymen, and misrepresented as your works have been, by those who have the ear of the vulgar, it will seem wonderful to many that I should make choice of you, from the circle of my friends, to dedicate to you these beginnings of my thoughts upon the most important subject of these or any times. And when I state the reason to be, that you have been more profitable to my faith in orthodox doctrine, to my spiritual understanding of the Word of God, and to my right conception of the Christian Church, than any or all of the men with whom I have entertained friendship and conversation, it will perhaps still more astonish the mind, and stagger the belief, of those who have adopted, as once I did myself, the misrepresentations which are purchased for a hire and vended for a price, concerning your character and works. You have only to shut your ear to what they ignorantly say of you, and earnestly to meditate the deep thoughts with which you are instinct, and give them a suitable body and form that they may live, then silently commit them to the good sense of ages yet to come, in order to be ranked hereafter amongst the most gifted sages and greatest benefactors of your country. Enjoy and occupy the quiet which, after many trials, the providence of God hath bestowed upon you, in the bosom of your friends; and may you be spared until you have made known the multitude of your thoughts, unto those who at present value, or shall hereafter arise to value, their worth.

I have partaken so much high intellectual enjoyment from being admitted into the close and familiar intercourse with which you have honoured me, and your many conversations concerning the revelations of the Christian faith have been so profitable to me in every sense, as a student and a preacher of the Gospel, as a spiritual man and a Christian pastor, and your high intelligence and great learning have at all times so kindly stooped to my ignorance and inexperience, that not merely with the affection of friend to friend, and the honour due from youth to experienced age, but with the gratitude of a disciple to a wise and generous teacher, of an anxious inquirer to the good man who hath helped him in the way of truth, I do now presume to offer you the first-fruits of my mind since it received a new impulse towards truth, and a new insight into its depths, from listening to your discourse. Accept them in good part, and be assured that however insignificant in themselves, they are the offering of a heart which loves your heart, and of a mind which looks up with reverence to your mind.

Edward Irving.

"Old friend Thornton" was Leigh Hunt's son, Thornton Leigh Hunt, whom Lamb had addressed in verse in 1815 as "my favourite child." He was now fourteen.]

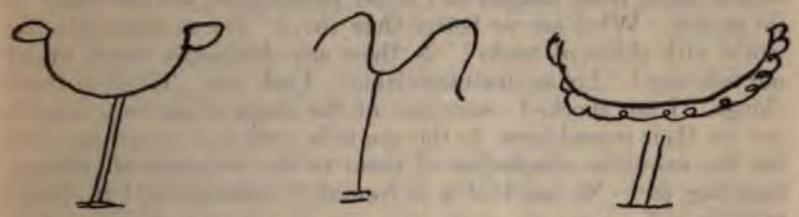
LETTER 341

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. December 1, 1824.]

DEAR B. B.—If Mr. Mitford will send me a full and circumstantial description of his desired vases, I will transmit the same to a Gentleman resident at Canton, whom I think I have

interest enough in to take the proper care for their execution. But Mr. M. must have patience. China is a great way off, further perhaps than he thinks; and his next year's roses must be content to wither in a Wedgewood pot. He will please to say whether he should like his Arms upon them, &c. I send herewith some patterns which suggest themselves to me at the first blush of the subject, but he will probably consult his own taste after all.



The last pattern is obviously fitted for ranunculuses only. The two former may indifferently hold daisies, marjoram, sweet williams, and that sort. My friend in Canton is Inspector of Teas, his name Ball; and I can think of no better tunnel. I shall expect Mr. M.'s decision.

Taylor and Hessey finding their magazine goes off very heavily at 2s. 6d. are prudently going to raise their price another shilling; and having already more authors than they want, intend to increase the number of them. If they set up against the New Monthly, they must change their present hands. It is not tying the dead carcase of a Review to a half-dead Magazine will do their business. It is like G. D. multiplying his volumes to make 'em sell better. When he finds one will not go off, he publishes two; two stick, he tries three; three hang fire, he is confident that four will have a better chance.

And now, my dear Sir, trifling apart, the gloomy catastrophe of yesterday morning prompts a sadder vein. The fate of the unfortunate Fauntleroy makes me, whether I will or no, to cast reflecting eyes around on such of my friends as by a parity of situation are exposed to a similarity of temptation. My very style, seems to myself to become more impressive than usual, with the change of theme. Who that standeth, knoweth but he may yet fall? Your hands as yet, I am most willing to believe, have never deviated into others' property. You think it impossible that you could ever commit so heinous an offence. But so thought Fauntleroy once; so have thought many besides him, who at last have expiated, as he hath done. You are as yet upright. But you are a Banker, at least the next thing to it. I feel the delicacy of the subject; but cash must pass thro' your hands, sometimes to a great amount.

If in an unguarded hour—— but I will hope better. Consider the scandal it will bring upon those of your persuasion. Thousands would go to see a Quaker hanged, that would be indifferent to the fate of a Presbyterian, or an Anabaptist. Think of the effect it would have on the sale of your poems alone; not to mention higher considerations. I tremble, I am sure, at myself, when I think that so many poor victims of the Law at one time of their life made as sure of never being hanged as I in my presumption am too ready to do myself. What are we better than they? Do we come into the world with different necks? Is there any distinctive mark under our left ears? Are we unstrangulable? I ask you. Think of these things. I am shocked sometimes at the shape of my own fingers, not for their resemblance to the ape tribe (which is something) but for the exquisite adaptation of them to the purposes of picking, fingering, &c. No one that is so framed, I maintain it, but should tremble.

Postscript for your Daughter's eyes only.

Dear Miss—Your pretty little letterets make me ashamed of my great straggling coarse handwriting. I wonder where you get pens to write so small. Sure they must be the pinions of a small wren, or a robin. If you write so in your Album, you must give us glasses to read by. I have seen a Lady's similar book all writ in following fashion. I think it pretty and fanciful.

> "O how I love in early dawn
> To bend my steps o'er flowery dawn [lawn],"

which I think has an agreeable variety to the eye. Which I recommend to your notice, with friend Elia's best wishes.

Note

[The *London Magazine* began a new series at half a crown with the number for January, 1825. It had begun to decline very noticeably. The *New Monthly Magazine*, to the January number of which Lamb contributed his "Illustrious Defunct" essay, was its most serious rival. Lamb returned to some of his old vivacity and copiousness in the *London Magazine* for January, 1825. To that number he contributed his "Biographical Memoir of Mr. Liston" and the "Vision of Horns"; and to the February number "Letter to an old Gentleman," "Unitarian Protests" and the "Autobiography of Mr. Munden."

"G. D."—George Dyer again.

"Fauntleroy." See note on page 656. Fauntleroy's fate seems to have had great fascination for Lamb. He returned to the sub-

ject, in the vein of this letter, in "The Last Peach," a little essay printed in the *London Magazine* for April, 1825 (see Vol. I. of this edition, page 283); and in *Memories of old Friends, being Extracts from the Journals and Letters of Caroline Fox, . . . from 1835 to 1871*, 1882, I find the following entry:—

October 25 [1839].—G. Wightwick and others dined with us. He talked agreeably about capital punishments, greatly doubting their having any effect in preventing crime. Soon after Fauntleroy was hanged, an advertisement appeared, "To all good Christians! Pray for the soul of Fauntleroy." This created a good deal of speculation as to whether he was a Catholic, and at one of Coleridge's soirées it was discussed for a considerable time; at length Coleridge, turning to Lamb, asked, "Do you know anything about this affair?" "I should think I d-d-d-did," said Elia, "for I paid s-s-s-seven and sixpence for it!"

Lamb's postscript is written in extremely small characters, similar to those facsimiled opposite page 550, and the letters of the two lines of verse are in alternate red and black inks. It was this letter which, Edward FitzGerald tells us, Thackeray pressed to his forehead, with the remark "Saint Charles!" Hitherto, the postscript not having been thought worthy of print by previous editors, it was a little difficult to understand why this particular letter had been selected for Thackeray's epithet. But when one thinks of the patience with which, after making gentle fun of her father, Lamb sat down to amuse Lucy Barton, and, as Thackeray did, thinks also of his whole life, it becomes more clear.]

LETTER 342

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN BATES DIBDIN

[P.M. January 11, 1825.]

MY Dear Sir—Pray return my best thanks to your father for his little volume. It is like all of his I have seen, spirited, good humoured, and redolent of the wit and humour of a century ago. He should have lived with Gay and his set. The Chessiad is so clever that I relish'd it in spite of my total ignorance of the game. I have it not before me, but I remember a capital simile of the Charwoman letting in her Watchman husband, which is better than Butler's Lobster turned to Red. Hazard is a grand Character, Jove in his Chair. When you are disposed to leave your one room for my six, Colebrooke is where it was, and my sister begs me to add that as she is disappointed of meeting your sister *your way*, we shall be most happy to see her *our way*, when you have an

evens. to spare. Do not stand on ceremonies and introductions, but come at once. I need not say that if you can induce your father to join the party, it will be so much the pleasanter. Can you name an evening *next week?* I give you long credit.

Meantime am
as usual
yours truly
C. L.

E. I. H.
11 Jan. 25.

When I saw the Chessiad advertised by C. D. the Younger, I hoped it might be yours. What title is left for you—
Charles Dibdin *the Younger, Junior.*
O No, you are Timothy.

NOTE

[Charles Dibdin the Younger wrote a mock-heroic poem, "The Chessiad," which was published with *Comic Tales* in 1825. The simile of the charwoman runs thus:—

Now Morning, yawning, rais'd her from her bed,
Slipp'd on her wrapper blue and 'kerchief red,
And took from Night the key of Sleep's abode;
For Night within that mansion had bestow'd
The Hours of day; now, turn and turn about,
Morn takes the key and lets the Day-hours out;
Laughing, they issue from the ebon gate,
And Night walks in. As when, in drowsy state,
Some watchman, wed to one who chars all day,
Takes to his lodging's door his creeping way;
His rib, arising, lets him in to sleep,
While she emerges to scrub, dust, and sweep.

This is the lobster simile in *Hudibras*, Part II., Canto 2, lines 29-32:—

The sun had long since, in the lap
Of Thetis, taken out his nap,
And, like a lobster boiled, the morn
From black to red began to turn.

Hazard is the chief of the gods in the Chessiad's little drama.
"You are Timothy." See page 611.
I have included in Vol. I. of the present edition a review of Dibdin's book, in the *New Times*, January 27, 1825, which both from internal evidence and from the quotation of the charwoman passage I take to be by Lamb, who was writing for that paper at that time.]

LETTER 343

CHARLES LAMB TO SARAH HUTCHINSON

[P.M. January 20, 1825.]

The brevity of this is owing to scratching it off at my desk amid expected interruptions. By habit, I can write Letters only at office.

DEAR Miss H. Thank you for a noble Goose, which wanted only the massive Encrustation that we used to pick-axe open about this season in old Gloster Place. When shall we eat another Goosepye together? The pheasant too must not be forgotten, twice as big and half as good as a partridge. You ask about the editor of the Lond. I know of none. This first specimen is flat and pert enough to justify subscribers who grudge at t'other shilling. De Quincey's Parody was submitted to him before printed, and had his Probatum. The "Horns" is in a poor taste, resembling the most laboured papers in the Spectator. I had sign'd it "Jack Horner:" but Taylor and Hessey said, it would be thought an offensive article, unless I put my known signature to it; and wrung from me my slow consent. But did you read the "Memoir of Liston"? and did you guess whose it was? Of all the Lies I ever put off, I value this most. It is from top to toe, every paragraph, Pure Invention; and has passed for Gospel, has been republished in newspapers, and in the penny play-bills of the Night, as an authentic Account. I shall certainly go to the Naughty Man some day for my Fibbings. In the next No. I figure as a Theologian! and have attacked my late brethren, the Unitarians. What Jack Pudding tricks I shall play next, I know not. I am almost at the end of my Tether.

Coleridge is quite blooming; but his Book has not budded yet. I hope I have spelt Torquay right now, and that this will find you all mending, and looking forward to a London flight with the Spring. Winter *we* have had none, but plenty of foul weather. I have lately pick'd up an Epigram which pleased me.

Two noble Earls, whom if I quote,
  Some folks might call me Sinner;
The one invented half a coat;
  The other half a dinner.

The plan was good, as some will say
  And fitted to console one:
Because, in this poor starving day,
  Few can afford a whole one.

I have made the Lame one still lamer by imperfect memory, but spite of bald diction, a little done to it might improve it into a good one. You have nothing else to do at [*"Talk kay" here written and scratched out*] Torquay. Suppose you try it. Well God bless you all, as wishes Mary, [most] sincerely, with many thanks for Letter &c. ELIA.

NOTE

[Addressed "For Miss Hutchinson, T. Monkhouse Esqre., Torquay, Devonshire."

The Monkhouses' house in London was at 34 Gloucester Place.

Lamb's De Quincey parody was the "Letter to an Old Gentleman, whose Education has been Neglected".

"Coleridge's book"—the *Aids to Reflection*, published in May or June, 1825.

"I have lately pick'd up an Epigram." This is by Henry Man, an old South-Sea House clerk, whom in his South-Sea House essay Lamb mentions as a wit. The epigram, which refers to Lord Spencer and Lord Sandwich, will be found in Man's *Miscellaneous Works*, 1802.]

LETTER 344

CHARLES LAMB TO VINCENT NOVELLO

[P.M. Jan. 25, 1825.]

DEAR Corelli, My sister's cold is as obstinate as an old Handelian, whom a modern amateur is trying to convert to Mozart-ism. As company must & always does injure it, Emma and I propose to come to you in the evening of tomorrow, *instead of meeting here.* An early bread-and-cheese supper at ½ past eight will oblige us. Loves to the Bearer of many Children.

C. LAMB.

Tuesday
Colebrooke.

I sign with a black seal, that you may begin to think, her cold has killed Mary, which will be an agreeable UNSURPRISE when you read the Note.

NOTE

[This is the first letter to Novello, who was the peculiar champion of Mozart and Haydn. Lamb calls him Corelli after Archangelo Corelli (1653-1713), the violinist and composer. It was part of a

joke between Lamb and Novello that Lamb should affect to know a great deal about music. See the *Elia* essay "A Chapter on Ears" for a description of Novello's playing. Mrs. Novello was the mother of eleven children.]

LETTER 345

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[Dated at end: 10 February, 1825.]

DEAR B. B.—I am vexed that ugly paper should have offended. I kept it as clear from objectionable phrases as possible, and it was Hessey's fault, and my weakness, that it did not appear anonymous. No more of it for God's sake.

The Spirit of the Age is by Hazlitt. The characters of Coleridge, &c. he had done better in former publications, the praise and the abuse much stronger, &c. but the new ones are capitally done. Horne Tooke is a matchless portrait. My advice is, to borrow it rather than read [? buy] it. I have it. He has laid on too many colours on my likeness, but I have had so much injustice done me in my own name, that I make a rule of accepting as much over-measure to Elia as Gentlemen think proper to bestow. Lay it on and spare not.

Your Gentleman Brother sets my mouth a watering after Liberty. O that I were kicked out of Leadenhall with every mark of indignity, and a competence in my fob. The birds of the air would not be so free as I should. How I would prance and curvet it, and pick up cowslips, and ramble about purposeless as an ideot! The Author-mometer is a good fancy. I have caused great speculation in the dramatic (not *thy*) world by a Lying Life of Liston, all pure invention. The Town has swallowed it, and it is copied into News Papers, Play Bills, etc., as authentic. You do not know the Droll, and possibly missed reading the article (in our 1st No., New Series). A life more improbable for him to have lived would not be easily invented. But your rebuke, coupled with "Dream on J. Bunyan," checks me. I'd rather do more in my favorite way, but feel dry. I must laugh sometimes. I am poor Hypochondriacus, and *not* Liston.

Our 2nd No is all trash. What are T. and H. about? It is whip syllabub, "thin sown with aught of profit or delight." Thin sown! not a germ of fruit or corn. Why did poor Scott die! There was comfort in writing with such associates as were his little

band of Scribblers, some gone away, some affronted away, and I am left as the solitary widow looking for water cresses.

The only clever hand they have is Darley, who has written on the Dramatists, under name of John Lacy. But his function seems suspended.

I have been harassed more than usually at office, which has stopt my correspondence lately. I write with a confused aching head, and you must accept this apology for a Letter.

I will do something soon if I can as a peace offering to the Queen of the East Angles. Something she shan't scold about.

For the Present, farewell.

Thine C. L.

10 Feb. 1825.

I am fifty years old this day. Drink my health.

NOTE

["That ugly paper" was "A Vision of Horns."

Hazlitt's *Spirit of the Age* had just been published, containing criticisms, among others, of Coleridge, Horne Tooke and Lamb. Lamb was very highly praised. Here is a passage from the article:—

How admirably he has sketched the former inmates of the South-Sea House; what "fine fretwork he makes of their double and single entries!" With what a firm yet subtle pencil he has embodied "Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist!" How notably he embalms a battered *beau;* how delightfully an amour, that was cold forty years ago, revives in his pages! With what well-disguised humour he introduces us to his relations, and how freely he serves up his friends! Certainly, some of his portraits are *fixtures*, and will do to hang up as lasting and lively emblems of human infirmity. Then there is no one who has so sure an ear for "the chimes at midnight," not even excepting Mr. Justice Shallow; nor could Master Silence himself take his "cheese and pippins" with a more significant and satisfactory air. With what a gusto Mr. Lamb describes the Inns and Courts of law, the Temple and Gray's Inn, as if he had been a student there for the last two hundred years, and had been as well acquainted with the person of Sir Francis Bacon as he is with his portrait or writings! It is hard to say whether St. John's Gate is connected with more intense and authentic associations in his mind, as a part of old London Wall, or as the frontispiece (time out of mind) of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. He hunts Watling Street like a gentle spirit; the avenues to the play-houses are thick with panting recollections; and Christ's Hospital still breathes the balmy breath of infancy in his description of it!

"Your Gentleman Brother"—John Barton, Bernard's younger half-brother.

"The Author-mometer." I have not discovered to what Lamb refers.

"Dream on J. Bunyan." Probably a poem by Barton, but I have not traced it.

"Thin sown," etc. See note on page 653.

"T. and H."—Taylor & Hessey.

"Poor Scott"—John Scott, who founded the *London Magazine* (see note on page 434).

"Darley"—George Darley (1795-1846), author of *Sylvia; or, The May Queen*, 1827.

"The Queen of the East Angles." Possibly Lucy Barton, possibly Anne Knight, a friend of Barton's.]

LETTER 346

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS MANNING

[Not dated. ? February, 1825.]

MY dear M.,—You might have come inopportunely a week since, when we had an inmate. At present and for as long as *ever* you like, our castle is at your service. I saw Tuthill yesternight, who has done for me what may

> "To all my nights and days to come,
> Give solely sovran sway and masterdom."

But I dare not hope, for fear of disappointment. I cannot be more explicit at present. But I have it under his own hand, that I am *non*-capacitated (I cannot write it *in*-) for business. O joyous imbecility! Not a susurration of this to *anybody!*

Mary's love. C. LAMB.

NOTE

[Lamb had just taken a most momentous step in his career and had consulted Tuthill as to his health, in the hope of perhaps obtaining release and a pension from the East India House. We learn more of this soon.

"To all my nights and days . . ." See "Macbeth," I., 5, 70, 71.

Here might come two brief notes to Dibdin, of no importance.]

LETTER 347

CHARLES LAMB TO SARAH HUTCHINSON

[Dated at end: March 1, 1825.]

DEAR Miss Hutchinson Your news has made us all very sad. I had my hopes to the last. I seem as if I were disturbing you at such an awful time even by a reply. But I must acknow-

ledge your kindness in presuming upon the interest we shall all feel on the subject. No one will more feel it than Robinson, to whom I have written. No one more than he and we acknowleged the nobleness and worth of what we have lost. Words are perfectly idle. We can only pray for resignation to the Survivors. Our dearest expressions of condolence to Mrs. M—— at this time in particular. God bless you both. I have nothing of ourselves to tell you, and if I had, I could not be so unreverent as to trouble you with it. We are all well, that is all. Farewell, the departed —and the left. Your's and his, while memory survives, cordially

C. Lamb.

1 Mar. 1825.

Note

[The letter refers to the death of Thomas Monkhouse.

Here should come an undated note from Lamb to Procter, in which Lamb refers to the same loss: "We shall be most glad to see you, though more glad to have seen double *you*."]

LETTER 348

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. March 23, 1825.]
Wednesday.

DEAR B. B.—I have had no impulse to write, or attend to any single object but myself, for weeks past. My single self. I by myself I. I am sick of hope deferred. The grand wheel is in agitation that is to turn up my Fortune, but round it rolls and will turn up nothing. I have a glimpse of Freedom, of becoming a Gentleman at large, but I am put off from day to day. I have offered my resignation, and it is neither accepted nor rejected. Eight weeks am I kept in this fearful suspence. Guess what an absorbing stake I feel it. I am not conscious of the existence of friends present or absent. The E. I. Directors alone can be that thing to me—or not.—

I have just learn'd that nothing will be decided this week. Why the next? Why any week? It has fretted me into an itch of the fingers, I rub 'em against Paper and write to you, rather than not allay this Scorbuta.

While I can write, let me adjure you to have no doubts of Irving. Let Mr. Mitford drop his disrespect. Irving has prefixed

a dedication (of a Missionary Subject 1st part) to Coleridge, the most beautiful cordial and sincere. He there acknowledges his obligation to S. T. C. for his knowledge of Gospel truths, the nature of a Xtian Church, etc., to the talk of S. T. C. (at whose Gamaliel feet he sits weekly) [more] than to that of all the men living. This from him—The great dandled and petted Sectarian—to a religious character so equivocal in the world's Eye as that of S. T. C., so foreign to the Kirk's estimate!—Can this man be a Quack? The language is as affecting as the Spirit of the Dedication. Some friend told him, "This dedication will do you no Good," *i.e.* not in the world's repute, or with your own People. "That is a reason for doing it," quoth Irving.

I am thoroughly pleased with him. He is firm, outspeaking, intrepid—and docile as a pupil of Pythagoras.

You must like him.

Yours, in tremors of painful hope, C. LAMB.

NOTE

[In the first paragraphs Lamb refers to the great question of his release from the India House.

For Irving see note to Letter 340. In a letter of Mary Russell Mitford, who looked upon Irving as quack absolute, dated February 19, 1825, we find her discussing the preacher with Charles Lamb.]

LETTER 349

CHARLES LAMB TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

[March 29], 1825.

I HAVE left the d——d India House for Ever!
Give me great joy. C. LAMB.

NOTE

[Robinson states in his Reminiscences of Coleridge, Wordsworth and Lamb, preserved in MS. at Dr. Williams' Library: "A most important incident in Lamb's life, tho' in the end not so happy for him as he anticipated, was his obtaining his discharge, with a pension of almost £400 a year, from the India House. This he announced to me by a note put into my letter box: 'I have left the India House. D—— Time. I'm all for eternity.' He was

rather more than 50 years of age. I found him and his Sister in high spirits when I called to wish them joy on the 22 of April. 'I never saw him so calmly cheerful,' says my journal, 'as he seemed then.'" See the next letters for Lamb's own account of the event.]

LETTER 350

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Colebrook Cottage,
6 April, 1825.

DEAR Wordsworth, I have been several times meditating a letter to you concerning the good thing which has befallen me, but the thought of poor Monkhouse came across me. He was one that I had exulted in the prospect of congratulating me. He and you were to have been the first participators, for indeed it has been ten weeks since the first motion of it.

Here I am then after 33 years slavery, sitting in my own room at 11 o'Clock this finest of all April mornings a freed man, with £441 a year for the remainder of my life, live I as long as John Dennis, who outlived his annuity and starved at 90. £441, i.e. £450, with a deduction of £9 for a provision secured to my sister, she being survivor, the Pension guaranteed by Act Georgii Tertii, &c.

I came home for ever on Tuesday in last week. The incomprehensibleness of my condition overwhelm'd me. It was like passing from life into Eternity. Every year to be as long as three, i.e. to have three times as much real time, time that is my own, in it! I wandered about thinking I was happy, but feeling I was not. But that tumultuousness is passing off, and I begin to understand the nature of the gift. Holydays, even the annual month, were always uneasy joys: their conscious fugitiveness—the craving after making the most of them. Now, when all is holyday, there are no holydays. I can sit at home in rain or shine without a restless impulse for walkings. I am daily steadying, and shall soon find it as natural to me to be my own master, as it has been irksome to have had a master. Mary wakes every morning with an obscure feeling that some good has happened to us.

Leigh Hunt and Montgomery after their releasements describe the shock of their emancipation much as I feel mine. But it hurt their frames. I eat, drink, and sleep sound as ever. I lay no anxious schemes for going hither and thither, but take things as they occur. Yesterday I excursioned 20 miles, to day I write a few letters.

Pleasuring was for fugitive play days, mine are fugitive only in the sense that life is fugitive. Freedom and life co-existent.

At the foot of such a call upon you for gratulation, I am ashamd to advert to that melancholy event. Monkhouse was a character I learnd to love slowly, but it grew upon me, yearly, monthly, daily. What a chasm has it made in our pleasant parties! His noble friendly face was always coming before me, till this hurrying event in my life came, and for the time has absorpt all interests. In fact it has shaken me a little. My old desk companions with whom I have had such merry hours seem to reproach me for removing my lot from among them. They were pleasant creatures, but to the anxieties of business, and a weight of possible worse ever impending, I was not equal. Tuthill and Gilman gave me my certificates. I laughed at the friendly lie implied in them, but my sister shook her head and said it was all true. Indeed this last winter I was jaded out, winters were always worse than other parts of the year, because the spirits are worse, and I had no daylight. In summer I had daylight evenings. The relief was hinted to me from a superior power, when I poor slave had not a hope but that I must wait another 7 years with Jacob—and lo! the Rachel which I coveted is bro^t^. to me—

Have you read the noble dedication of Irving's "Missionary Orations" to S. T. C. Who shall call this man a Quack hereafter? What the Kirk will think of it neither I nor Irving care. When somebody suggested to him that it would not be likely to do him good, videlicet among his own people, "That is a reason for doing it" was his noble answer.

That Irving thinks he has profited mainly by S. T. C., I have no doubt. The very style of the Ded. shows it.

Communicate my news to Southey, and beg his pardon for my being so long acknowledging his kind present of the "Church," which circumstances I do not wish to explain, but having no reference to himself, prevented at the time. Assure him of my deep respect and friendliest feelings.

Divide the same, or rather each take the whole to you, I mean you and all yours. To Miss Hutchinson I must write separate. What's her address? I want to know about Mrs. M.

Farewell! and end at last, long selfish Letter! C. LAMB.

NOTE

[Lamb expanded the first portion of this letter into the *Elia* essay "The Superannuated Man," which ought to be read in connection with it (see Vol. II. of the present edition).

"Now when all is holyday." Shakespeare had written:—

If all the year were playing holidays,
To sport would be as tedious as to work.
"I. Henry IV.," I., 2, 227-228.

Leigh Hunt and James Montgomery, the poet, had both undergone imprisonment for libel.

At a Court of Directors of the India House held on March 29, 1825, it was resolved "that the resignation of Mr. Charles Lamb of the Accountant General's Office, on account of certified ill-health, be accepted, and, it appearing that he has served the Company faithfully for 33 years, and is now in the receipt of an income of £730 per annum, he be allowed a pension of £450 (four hundred and fifty pounds) per annum, under the provisions of the act of the 53 Geo. III., cap. 155, to commence from this day."]

LETTER 351

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. April 6, 1825.]

DEAR B. B.—My spirits are so tumultuary with the novelty of my recent emancipation, that I have scarce steadiness of hand, much more mind, to compose a letter.

I am free, B. B.—free as air.

The little bird that wings the sky
Knows no such Liberty!

I was set free on Tuesday in last week at 4 o'Clock.

I came home for ever!

I have been describing my feelings as well as I can to Wordsw^th^. in a long letter, and don't care to repeat. Take it briefly that for a few days I was painfully oppressed by so mighty a change, but it is becoming daily more natural to me.

I went and sat among 'em all at my old 33 years desk yester morning; and deuce take me if I had not yearnings at leaving all my old pen and ink fellows, merry sociable lads, at leaving them in the Lurch, fag, fag, fag.

The comparison of my own superior felicity gave me any thing but pleasure.

B. B., I would not serve another 7 years for seven hundred thousand pounds!

I have got £441 net for life, sanctioned by Act of Parliament, with a provision for Mary if she survives me.

I will live another 50 years; or, if I live but 10, they will be

thirty, reckoning the quantity of real time in them, *i.e.* the time that is a man's own.

Tell me how you like "Barbara S."—will it be received in atonement for the foolish Vision, I mean by the Lady?

Apropos, I never saw Mrs. Crauford in my life, nevertheless 'tis all true of Somebody.

Address me in future

Colebrook Cottage,
Islington.

I am really nervous (but that will wear off) so take this brief announcement.

Yours truly C. L.

NOTE

["The little bird . . ." This is Lamb's version of Lovelace's—

> The birds that wanton in the air
> Know no such liberty,

in the poem "To Althea, from Prison."

"Barbara S——," the *Elia* essay, was printed in the *London Magazine* April, 1825 (see Vol. II. of this edition). It purports to be an incident in the life of Mrs. Crawford, the actress, but had really happened to Fanny Kelly.

The following letter tells the story of Lamb's emancipation once more:—]

LETTER 352

CHARLES LAMB TO SARAH HUTCHINSON

[P.M. April 18, 1825.]

DEAR Miss Hutchinson—You want to know all about my gaol delivery. Take it then. About 12 weeks since I had a sort of intimation that a resignation might be well accepted from me. This was a kind bird's whisper. On that hint I spake. Gilman and Tuthill furnishd me with certificates of wasted health and sore spirits—not much more than the truth, I promise you—and for 9 weeks I was kept in a fright—I had gone too far to recede, and they might take advantage and dismiss me with a much less sum than I had reckoned on. However Liberty came at last with a liberal provision. I have given up what I could have lived on in the country, but have enough to live here by managem^t. and scribbling occasionally. I would not go back to my prison for seven

years longer for £10000 a year. 7 years after one is 50 is no trifle to give up. Still I am a young *Pensioner*, and have served but 33 years, very few I assure you retire before 40, 45, or 50 years' service.

You will ask how I bear my freedom. Faith, for some days I was staggered. Could not comprehend the magnitude of my deliverance, was confused, giddy, knew not whether I was on my head or my heel as they say. But those giddy feelings have gone away, and my weather glass stands at a degree or two above

CONTENT

I go about quiet, and have none of that restless hunting after recreation which made holydays formerly uneasy joys. All being holydays, I feel as if I had none, as they do in heaven, where 'tis all red letter days.

I have a kind letter from the Words^wths^ *congratulatory* not a little.

It is a damp, I do assure you, amid all my prospects that I can receive *none* from a quarter upon which I had calculated, almost more than from any, upon receiving congratulations. I had grown to like poor M. more and more. I do not esteem a soul living or not living more warmly than I had grown to esteem and value him. But words are vain. We have none of us to count upon many years. That is the only cure for sad thoughts. If only some died, and the rest were permanent on earth, what a thing a friend's death would be then!

I must take leave, having put off answering [a load] of letters to this morning, and this, alas! is the 1st. Our kindest remembrances to Mrs. Monkhouse and believe us

Yours most Truly, C. Lamb.

LETTER 353

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM HONE

[P.M. May 2, 1825.]

DEAR Hone,—I send you a trifle; you have seen my lines, I suppose, in the "London." I cannot tell you how much I like the "St. Chad Wells."

Yours truly
C. Lamb.

P.S. Why did you not stay, or come again, yesterday?

NOTE

[These words accompany Lamb's contribution, "Remarkable Correspondent," to Hone's *Every-Day Book* (see Vol. I. of this edition, page 297). Lamb was helping Hone in his new venture as much as he was able; and Hone in return dedicated the first volume to him. "St. Chad's Wells" was an article by Hone in the number for March 2.]

LETTER 354

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

[No date. May, 1825.]

DEAR W. I write post-hoste to ensure a frank. Thanks for your hearty congratulations. I may now date from the 6th week of my Hegira or Flight from Leadenhall. I have lived so much in it, that a Summer seems already past, and 'tis but early May yet with you and other people. How I look down on the Slaves and drudges of the world! its inhabitants are a vast cotton-web of spin spin spinners. O the carking cares! O the money-grubbers—sempiternal muckworms!

Your Virgil I have lost sight of, but suspect it is in the hands of Sir G. Beaumont. I think that circumstances made me shy of procuring it before. Will you write to him about it? and your commands shall be obeyed to a tittle.

Coleridge has just finishd his prize Essay, which if it get the Prize he'll touch an additional £100 I fancy. His Book too (commentary on Bishop Leighton) is quite finished and *penes* Taylor and Hessey.

In the London which is just out (1st May) are 2 papers entitled the *Superannuated Man*, which I wish you to see, and also 1st Apr. a little thing called Barbara S—— a story gleaned from Miss Kelly. The L. M. if you can get it will save my enlargement upon the topic of my manumission.

I must scribble to make up my hiatus crumenæ, for there are so many ways, pious and profligate, of getting rid of money in this vast city and suburbs that I shall miss my third: but couragio. I despair not. Your kind hint of the Cottage was well thrown out. An anchorage for *age* and school of economy when necessity comes. But without this latter I have an unconquerable terror of changing Place. It does not agree with us. I say it from conviction. Else—I do sometimes ruralize in fancy.

Some d——d people are come in and I must finish abruptly. By d——d, I only mean *deuced*. 'Tis these suitors of Penelope that make it necessary to authorise a little for gin and mutton and such trifles.

Excuse my abortive scribble.

Yours not in more haste than heart C. L.

Love and recollects to all the Wms. Doras, Maries round your Wrekin.

Mary is capitally well.

Do write to Sir G. B. for I am shyish of applying to him.

NOTE

[Coleridge had been appointed to one of the ten Royal Associateships of the newly chartered Royal Society of Literature, thus becoming entitled to an annuity of 100 guineas. An essay was expected from each associate. Coleridge wrote on the *Prometheus* of Æschylus, and read it on May 18. His book was *Aids to Reflection*. See note on page 687.

"*Hiatus crumenæ*"—"Deficiency in my purse."

"I shall miss my thirds." Lamb's pension was two-thirds of his stipend.

"Some d—d people." A hint for Lamb's Popular Fallacy on Home, soon to be written.

"Round your Wrekin." Lamb repeats this phrase twice in the next few months. He got it from the Dedication to Farquhar's play "The Recruiting Officer"—"To all friends round the Wrekin"].

LETTER 355

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES CHAMBERS

[Undated. ? May, 1825.]

WITH regard to a John-dory, which you desire to be particularly informed about, I honour the fish, but it is rather on account of Quin who patronised it, and whose taste (of a *dead* man) I had as lieve go by as anybody's (Apicius and Heliogabalus excepted—this latter started nightingales' tongues and peacocks' brains as a garnish).

Else in *itself*, and trusting to my own poor single judgment, it hath not that moist mellow oleaginous gliding smooth descent from the tongue to the palate, thence to the stomach, &c., that your Brighton Turbot hath, which I take to be the most friendly and

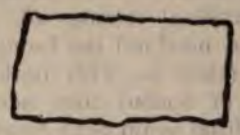
familiar flavor of any that swims—most genial and at home to the palate.

Nor has it on the other hand that fine falling off flakiness, that oleaginous peeling off (as it were, like a sea onion), which endears your cod's head & shoulders to some appetites; that manly firmness, combined with a sort of womanish coming-in-pieces, which the same cod's head & shoulders hath, where the whole is easily separable, pliant to a knife or a spoon, but each individual flake presents a pleasing resistance to the opposed tooth. You understand me—these delicate subjects are necessarily obscure.

But it has a third flavor of its own, perfectly distinct from Cod or Turbot, which it must be owned may to some not injudicious palates render it acceptable—but to my unpractised tooth it presented rather a crude river-fish-flavor, like your Pike or Carp, and perhaps like them should have been tamed & corrected by some laborious & well chosen sauce. Still I always suspect a fish which requires so much of artificial settings-off. Your choicest relishes (like nature's loveliness) need not the foreign aid of ornament, but are when unadorned (that is, with nothing but a little plain anchovy & a squeeze of lemon) then adorned the most. However, I shall go to Brighton again next Summer, and shall have an opportunity of correcting my judgment, if it is not sufficiently informed. I can only say that when Nature was pleased to make the John Dory so notoriously deficient in outward graces (as to be sure he is the very Rhinoceros of fishes, the ugliest dog that swims, except perhaps the Sea Satyr, which I never saw, but which they say is terrible), when she formed him with so few external advantages, she might have bestowed a more elaborate finish in his parts internal, & have given him a relish, a sapor, to recommend him, as she made Pope a Poet to make up for making him crooked.

I am sorry to find that you have got a knack of saying things which are not true to shew your wit. If I had no wit but what I must shew at the expence of my virtue or my modesty, I had as lieve be as stupid as * * * at the Tea Warehouse. Depend upon it, my dear Chambers, that an ounce of integrity at our death-bed will stand us in more avail than all the wit of Congreve or . . . For instance, you tell me a fine story about Truss, and his playing at Leamington, which I know to be false, because I have advice from Derby that he was whipt through the Town on that very day you say he appeared in some character or other, for robbing an old woman at church of a seal ring. And Dr. Parr has been two months dead. So it won't do to scatter these untrue stories about among people that know any thing. Besides, your forte is not invention. It is *judgment*, particularly shown in your choice of dishes. We seem in that instance born under one star. I like you

for liking hare. I esteem you for disrelishing minced veal. Liking is too cold a word.—I love you for your noble attachment to the fat unctuous juices of deer's flesh & the green unspeakable of turtle. I honour you for your endeavours to esteem and approve of my favorite, which I ventured to recommend to you as a substitute for hare, bullock's heart, and I am not offended that you cannot taste it with *my* palate. A true son of Epicurus should reserve one taste peculiar to himself. For a long time I kept the secret about the exceeding deliciousness of the marrow of boiled knuckle of veal, till my tongue weakly ran riot in its praises, and now it is prostitute & common.—But I have made one discovery which I will not impart till my dying scene is over, perhaps it will be my last mouthful in this world: delicious thought, enough to sweeten (or rather make savoury) the hour of death. It is a little square bit about this size in or near the knuckle bone of a fried



joint of . . . fat I can't call it nor lean neither altogether, it is that beautiful compound, which Nature must have made in Paradise Park venison, before she separated the two substances, the dry & the oleaginous, to punish sinful mankind; Adam ate them entire & inseparate, and this little taste of Eden in the knuckle bone of a fried . . . seems the only relique of a Paradisaical state. When I die, an exact description of its topography shall be left in a cupboard with a key, inscribed on which these words, "C. Lamb dying imparts this to C. Chambers as the only worthy depository of such a secret." You'll drop a tear. . . .

NOTE

[Charles Chambers was the brother of John Chambers (see page 518). He had been at Christ's Hospital with Lamb and subsequently became a surgeon in the Navy. He retired to Leamington and practised there until his death, somewhen about 1857, says Mr. Hazlitt. He seems to have inherited some of the epicure's tastes of his father, the "sensible clergyman in Warwickshire" who, Lamb tells us in "Thoughts on Presents of Game," "used to allow a pound of Epping to every hare."

The phrase "when unadorned" &c. is from Thomson's Seasons, "Autumn," line 204.

This letter adds one more to the list of Lamb's gustatory raptures, and it is remarkable as being his only eulogy of fish. Mr. Hazlitt says that the date September 1, 1817, has been added by another hand; but if the remark about Dr. Parr is true (he died March 6, 1825) the time is as I have stated. Fortunately the date in this particular case is unimportant. Mr. Hazlitt suggests that the stupid person in the Tea Warehouse was Bye, whom we met last in Letter 235.

Of Truss we know nothing. The name may be a misreading of Twiss (Horace Twiss, 1787-1849, politician, buffoon and Mrs. Siddons' nephew), who was quite a likely person to be lied about in joke at that time.]

LETTER 356

CHARLES LAMB TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[? June, 1825.]

MY dear Coleridge,—With pain and grief, I must entreat you to excuse us on Thursday. My head, though externally correct, has had a severe concussion in my long illness, and the very idea of an engagement hanging over for a day or two, forbids my rest; and I get up miserable. I am not well enough for company. I do assure you, no other thing prevents my coming. I expect Field and his brothers this or to-morrow evening, and it worries me to death that I am not ostensibly ill enough to put 'em off. I will get better, when I shall hope to see your nephew. He will come again. Mary joins in best love to the Gillmans. Do, I earnestly entreat you, excuse me. I assure you, again, that I am not fit to go out yet.

Yours (though shattered), C. LAMB.

Tuesday.

NOTE

[This letter has previously been dated 1829, but I think wrongly. Lamb had no long illness then, and Field was then in Gibraltar, where he was Chief-Justice. Lamb's long illness was in 1825, when Coleridge's Thursday evenings at Highgate were regular. Coleridge's nephew may have been one of several. I fancy it was the Rev. Edward Coleridge. Henry Nelson Coleridge had already left, I think, for the West Indies.]

LETTER 357

CHARLES LAMB TO HENRY COLBURN (?)

[Dated at end: June 14 (? 1825).]

DEAR Sir,

I am quite ashamed, after your kind letter, of having expressed any disappointment about my remuneration. It is quite equivalent to the value of any thing I have yet sent you. I had Twenty Guineas a sheet from the London; and what I did for them was more worth that sum, than any thing, I am afraid, I can now produce, would be worth the lesser sum. I used up all my best thoughts in that publication, and I do not like to go on writing worse & worse, & feeling that I do so. I want to try something else. However, if any subject turns up, which I think will do your Magazine no discredit, you shall have it at *your* price, or something between *that* and my old price. I prefer writing to seeing you just now, for after such a letter as I have received from you, in truth I am ashamed to see you. We will never mention the thing again.

Your obliged friend & Servt

C. LAMB.

June 14.

NOTE

[In the absence of any wrapper I have assumed this note to be addressed to Colburn, the publisher of the *New Monthly Magazine*. Lamb's first contribution to that periodical was "The Illustrious Defunct" (see Vol. I. of this edition) in January, 1825. A year later he began the "Popular Fallacies," and continued regularly for some months.]

LETTER 358

CHARLES LAMB TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[P.M. July 2, 1825.]

DEAR C.—We are going off to Enfield, to Allsop's, for a day or 2, with some intention of succeeding them in their lodging for a time, for this damn'd nervous Fever (vide Lond. Mag. for July) indisposes me for seeing any friends, and never any poor devil was so befriended as I am. Do you know any poor solitary human that

wants that cordial to life a—true friend? I can spare him twenty, he shall have 'em good cheap. I have gallipots of 'em—genuine balm of cares—a going—a going—a going. Little plagues plague me a 1000 times more than ever. I am like a disembodied soul—in this my eternity. I feel every thing entirely, all in all and all in etc. This price I pay for liberty, but am richly content to pay it. The Odes are 4-5ths done by Hood, a silentish young man you met at Islinton one day, an invalid. The rest are Reynolds's, whose sister H. has recently married. I have not had a broken finger in them.

They are hearty good-natured things, and I would put my name to 'em chearfully, if I could as honestly. I complimented them in a Newspaper, with an abatement for those puns you laud so. They are generally an excess. A Pun is a thing of too much consequence to be thrown in as a make-weight. You shall read one of the addresses over, and miss the puns, and it shall be quite as good and better than when you discover 'em. A Pun is a Noble Thing per se: O never lug it in as an accessory. A Pun is a sole object for reflection (vide *my* aids to that recessment from a savage state)—it is entire, it fills the mind: it is perfect as a Sonnet, better. It limps asham'd in the train and retinue of Humour: it knows it should have an establishment of its own. The one, for instance, I made the other day, I forget what it was.

Hood will be gratify'd, as much as I am, by your mistake. I liked 'Grimaldi' the best; it is true painting, of abstract Clownery, and that precious concrete of a Clown: and the rich succession of images, and words almost such, in the first half of the Mag. Ignotum. Your picture of the Camel, that would not or could not thread your nice needle-eye of Subtilisms, was confirm'd by Elton, who perfectly appreciated his abrupt departure. Elton borrowed the "Aids" from Hessey (by the way what is your Enigma about Cupid? I am Cytherea's son, if I understand a tittle of it), and returnd it next day saying that 20 years ago, when he was pure, he *thought* as you do now, but that he now thinks as you did 20 years ago. But E. seems a very honest fellow. Hood has just come in; his sick eyes sparkled into health when he read your approbation. They had meditated a copy for you, but postponed it till a neater 2d Edition, which is at hand.

Have you heard *the Creature* at the Opera House—Signor Non-vir sed VELUTI Vir?

Like Orpheus, he is said to draw storks *&c. after* him. A picked raisin for a sweet banquet of sounds; but I affect not these exotics. Nos DURUM genus, as mellifluous Ovid hath it.

Fanny Holcroft is just come in, with her paternal severity of aspect. She has frozen a bright thought which should have follow'd. She makes us marble, with too little conceiving. 'Twas

respecting the Signor, whom I honour on this side idolatry. Well, more of this anon.

We are setting out to walk to Enfield after our Beans and Bacon, which are just smoking.

Kindest remembrances to the G.'s ever.

From Islinton,
2d day, 3d month of my Hegira
or Flight from Leadenhall.

C. L. Olim Clericus.

NOTE

["To Allsop's." Allsop says in his *Letters . . . of Coleridge* that he and the Lambs were housemates for a long time.

"Vide Lond. Mag. for July"—where the *Elia* essay "The Convalescent" was printed.

"The Odes"—*Odes and Addresses to Great People*, 1825. Coleridge after reading the book had written to Lamb as follows (the letter is printed by Hood):—

MY DEAR CHARLES,—This afternoon, a little, thin, meanlooking sort of a foolscap, sub-octavo of poems, printed on very dingy outsides, lay on the table, which the cover informed me was circulating in our book-club, so very Grub-Streetish in all its appearance, internal as well as external, that I cannot explain by what accident of impulse (assuredly there was no *motive* in play) I came to look into it. Least of all, the title, Odes and Addresses to Great Men, which connected itself in my head with Rejected Addresses, and all the Smith and Theodore Hook squad. But, my dear Charles, it was certainly written by you, or under you, or *una cum* you. I know none of your frequent visitors capacious and assimilative enough of your converse to have reproduced you so honestly, supposing you had left yourself in pledge in his lock-up house. Gillman, to whom I read the spirited parody on the introduction to Peter Bell, the Ode to the Great Unknown, and to Mrs. Fry; he speaks doubtfully of Reynolds and Hood. But here come Irving and Basil Montagu.

Thursday night 10 *o'clock*.—No! Charles, it is *you*. I have read them over again, and I understand why you have *anon'd* the book. The puns are nine in ten good—many excellent—the Newgatory transcendent. And then the *exemplum sine exemplo* of a volume of personalities and contemporaneities, without a single line that could inflict the infinitesimal of an unpleasance on any man in his senses: saving and except perhaps in the envy-addled brain of the despiser of your *Lays*. If not a triumph over him, it is at least an *ovation*. Then, moreover, and besides, to speak with becoming modesty, excepting my own self, who is there but you who can write the musical lines and stanzas that are intermixed?

Here, Gillman, come up to my Garret, and driven back by the guardian spirits of four huge flower-holders of omnigenous roses and honeysuckles—(Lord have mercy on his hysterical olfactories! What will he do in Paradise? I must have a pair or two of nostril-plugs, or nose-goggles laid in his coffin)—stands at the door, reading that to M'Adam, and the washer-woman's letter, and he admits *the facts*. You are found *in the manner*, as the lawyers say! so, Mr. Charles! hang yourself up, and send me a line, by way of token and acknowledgment. My dear love to Mary. God bless you and your Unshamabramizer.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Reynolds was John Hamilton Reynolds. According to a marked copy in the possession of Mr. Buxton Forman, Reynolds wrote only

the odes to Mr. M'Adam, Mr. Dymoke, Sylvanus Urban, Elliston and the Dean and Chapter of Westminster.

The newspaper in which Lamb complimented the book was the *New Times*, for April 12, 1825. See Vol. I. of the present edition, page 285, for the review, where the remarks on puns are repeated. The "Mag. Ignotum" was the ode to the Great Unknown, the author of the Scotch novels. In the same paper on January 8, 1825, Lamb had written an essay called "Many Friends" (see Vol. I., page 270) a little in the manner of this first paragraph.

"Your picture of the Camel." Probably the story of a caller told by Coleridge to Lamb in a letter.

"Your Enigma about Cupid." Possibly referring to the following passage in the *Aids to Reflection*, 1825, pages 277-278:—

> From the remote East turn to the mythology of Minor Asia, to the Descendants of Javan *who dwelt in the tents of Shem, and possessed the Isles.* Here again, and in the usual form of an historic Solution, we find the same *Fact*, and as characteristic of the Human *Race*, stated in that earliest and most venerable Mythus (or symbolic Parable) of Prometheus—that truly wonderful Fable, in which the characters of the rebellious Spirit and of the Divine Friend of Mankind (*Θέος φιλάνθρωπος*) are united in the same Person: and thus in the most striking manner noting the forced amalgamation of the Patriarchal Tradition with the incongruous Scheme of Pantheism. This and the connected tale of Io, which is but the sequel of the Prometheus, stand alone in the Greek Mythology, in which elsewhere both Gods and Men are mere Powers and Products of Nature. And most noticeable it is, that soon after the promulgation and spread of the Gospel had awakened the moral sense, and had opened the eyes even of its wiser Enemies to the necessity of providing some solution of this great problem of the Moral World, the beautiful Parable of Cupid and Psyche was brought forward as a *rival* FALL OF MAN: and the fact of a moral corruption connatural with the human race was again recognized. In the assertion of ORIGINAL SIN the Greek Mythology rose and set.

"Elton"—Charles Abraham Elton, whom we have already met.

"Have you heard *the Creature*?"—Giovanni Battista Velluti (1781-1861), an Italian soprano singer who first appeared in England on June 30, 1825, in Meyerbeer's "Il Crociato in Egitto." He received £2,500 for five months' salary.

"*Nos durum genus*"—

> Inde genus durum sumus experiensque laborum.
> Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, I., 414.

"On this side idolatry." Ben Jonson's phrase of Shakespeare. In *Timber*.

"Olim Clericus"—"Formerly a clerk."]

LETTER 359

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. July 2, 1825.]

MY dear B. B.—My nervous attack has so unfitted me, that I have not courage to sit down to a Letter. My poor pittance in the London you will see is drawn from my sickness. Your Book is very acceptable to me, because most of it [is] new to me, but your Book itself we cannot thank you for more sincerely than for the introduction you favoured us with to Anne Knight. Now cannot I write *Mrs.* Anne Knight for the life of me. She is a very pleas—, but I won't write all we have said of her so often to ourselves, because I suspect you would read it to her. Only give my sister's and my kindest remembces to her, and how glad we are we can say that word. If ever she come to Southwark again I count upon another pleasant BRIDGE walk with her. Tell her, I got home, time for a rubber; but poor Tryphena will not understand that phrase of the worldlings.

I am hardly able to appreciate your volume now. But I liked the dedicatn much, and the apology for your bald burying grounds. To Shelly, but *that* is not new. To the young Vesper-singer, Great Bealing's, Playford, and what not?

If there be a cavil it is that the topics of religious consolation, however beautiful, are repeated till a sort of triteness attends them. It seems as if you were for ever losing friends' children by death, and reminding their parents of the Resurrection. Do children die so often, and so good, in your parts? The topic, taken from the consideratn that they are snatch'd away from *possible vanities*, seems hardly sound; for to an omniscient eye their conditional failings must be one with their actual; but I am too unwell for Theology.

Such as I am, I am yours and A. K.'s truly

C. LAMB.

NOTE

["My poor pittance"—"The Convalescent."

"Your Book"—Barton's *Poems*, 4th edition, 1825. The dedication was to Barton's sister, Maria Hack.

"Anne Knight." A Quaker lady, who kept a school at Woodbridge. Tryphena (Rom. xvi. 12) laboured in the Lord.

Here should come a letter from Lamb to Hone, dated Enfield, July 25, 1825. Lamb had written some quatrains to the editor of the *Every-Day Book*, which were printed in the *London Magazine*

for May, 1825. Hone copied them into his periodical, accompanied by a reply. Lamb began :—

> I like you, and your book, ingenuous Hone!

Hone's reply contained the sentiment :—

> I am "ingenuous": it is all I can
> Pretend to; it is all I wish to be.

See the *Every-Day Book*, Vol. I., July 9. Hone at this time was occupying Lamb's house at Colebrooke Row, while the Lambs were staying at the Allsops' lodgings at Enfield.

In the letter Lamb also refers to his "petit farce." Probably "The Pawnbroker's Daughter" (see Vol. V. of this edition). He says it is at the theatre now and Harley is there too. This would be John Pritt Harley, the actor. He was connected both with Drury Lane and the Lyceum. In an earlier note to Hone (printed by Mr. Fitzgerald) Lamb had asked him to take the farce to the theatre.

See Appendix III page 974, for a note to John Aitken.]

LETTER 360

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. August 10, 1825.]

We shall be soon again at Colebrook.

DEAR B. B.—You must excuse my not writing before, when I tell you we are on a visit at Enfield, where I do not feel it natural to sit down to a Letter. It is at all times an exertion. I had rather talk with you, and Ann Knight, quietly at Colebrook Lodge, over the matter of your last. You mistake me when you express misgivings about my relishing a series of scriptural poems. I wrote confusedly. What I meant to say was, that one or two consolatory poems on deaths would have had a more condensed effect than many. Scriptural—devotional topics—admit of infinite variety. So far from poetry tiring me because religious, I can read, and I say it seriously, the homely old version of the Psalms in our Prayer-books for an hour or two together sometimes without sense of weariness.

I did not express myself clearly about what I think a false topic insisted on so frequently in consolatory addresses on the death of Infants. I know something like it is in Scripture, but I think humanly spoken. It is a natural thought, a sweet fallacy to the

Survivors—but still a fallacy. If it stands on the doctrine of this being a probationary state, it is liable to this dilemma. Omniscience, to whom possibility must be clear as act, must know of the child, what it would hereafter turn out: if good, then the topic is false to say it is secured from falling into future wilfulness, vice, &c. If bad, I do not see how its exemption from certain future overt acts by being snatched away at all tells in its favor. You stop the arm of a murderer, or arrest the finger of a pickpurse, but is not the guilt incurred as much by the intent as if never so much acted? Why children are hurried off, and old reprobates of a hundred left, whose trial humanly we may think was complete at fifty, is among the obscurities of providence. The very notion of a state of probation has darkness in it. The all-knower has no need of satisfying his eyes by seeing what we will do, when he knows before what we will do. Methinks we might be condemn'd before commission. In these things we grope and flounder, and if we can pick up a little human comfort that the child taken is snatch'd from vice (no great compliment to it, by the bye), let us take it. And as to where an untried child goes, whether to join the assembly of its elders who have borne the heat of the day—fire-purified martyrs, and torment-sifted confessors—what know we? We promise heaven methinks too cheaply, and assign large revenues to minors, incompetent to manage them. Epitaphs run upon this topic of consolation, till the very frequency induces a cheapness. Tickets for admission into Paradise are sculptured out at a penny a letter, twopence a syllable, &c. It is all a mystery; and the more I try to express my meaning (having none that is clear) the more I flounder. Finally, write what your own conscience, which to you is the unerring judge, seems best, and be careless about the whimsies of such a half-baked notionist as I am. We are here in a most pleasant country, full of walks, and idle to our hearts desire. Taylor has dropt the London. It was indeed a dead weight. It has got in the Slough of Despond. I shuffle off my part of the pack, and stand like Xtian with light and merry shoulders. It had got silly, indecorous, pert, and every thing that is bad. Both our kind *remembrances* to Mrs. K. and yourself, and stranger's-greeting to Lucy—is it Lucy or Ruth?—that gathers wise sayings in a Book.

C. Lamb.

Note

[The *London Magazine* passed into the hands of Henry Southern in September, 1825. Lamb's last article for it was in the August number—"Imperfect Dramatic Illusion," reprinted in the *Last Essays of Elia* as "Stage Illusion."]

LETTER 361

CHARLES LAMB TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

August 10, 1825.

DEAR Southey,—You'll know who this letter comes from by opening slap-dash upon the text, as in the good old times. I never could come into the custom of envelopes; 'tis a modern foppery; the Plinian correspondence gives no hint of such. In singleness of sheet and meaning then I thank you for your little book. I am ashamed to add a codicil of thanks for your "Book of the Church." I scarce feel competent to give an opinion of the latter; I have not reading enough of that kind to venture at it. I can only say the fact, that I have read it with attention and interest. Being, as you know, not quite a Churchman, I felt a jealousy at the Church taking to herself the whole deserts of Christianity, Catholic and Protestant, from Druid extirpation downwards. I call all good Christians the Church, Capillarians and all. But I am in too light a humour to touch these matters. May all our churches flourish! Two things staggered me in the poem (and one of them staggered both of us). I cannot away with a beautiful series of verses, as I protest they are, commencing "Jenner." 'Tis like a choice banquet opened with a pill or an electuary—physic stuff. T'other is, we cannot make out how Edith should be no more than ten years old. By'r Lady, we had taken her to be some sixteen or upwards. We suppose you have only chosen the round number for the metre. Or poem and dedication may be both older than they pretend to; but then some hint might have been given; for, as it stands, it may only serve some day to puzzle the parish reckoning. But without inquiring further (for 'tis ungracious to look into a lady's years), the dedication is eminently pleasing and tender, and we wish Edith May Southey joy of it. Something, too, struck us as if we had heard of the death of John May. A John May's death was a few years since in the papers. We think the tale one of the quietest, prettiest things we have seen. You have been temperate in the use of localities, which generally spoil poems laid in exotic regions. You mostly cannot stir out (in such things) for humming-birds and fire-flies. A tree is a Magnolia, &c.—Can I but like the truly Catholic spirit? "Blame as thou mayest the Papist's erring creed"—which and other passages brought me back to the old Anthology days and the admonitory lesson to "Dear George" on the "The Vesper Bell," a little poem which retains its first hold upon me strangely.

The compliment to the translatress is daintily conceived. Nothing

is choicer in that sort of writing than to bring in some remote, impossible parallel,—as between a great empress and the inobtrusive quiet soul who digged her noiseless way so perseveringly through that rugged Paraguay mine. How she Dobrizhoffered it all out, it puzzles my slender Latinity to conjecture. Why do you seem to sanction Landor's unfeeling allegorising away of honest Quixote! He may as well say Strap is meant to symbolise the Scottish nation before the Union, and Random since that act of dubious issue; or that Partridge means the Mystical Man, and Lady Bellaston typifies the Woman upon Many Waters. Gebir, indeed, may mean the state of the hop markets last month, for anything I know to the contrary. That all Spain overflowed with romancical books (as Madge Newcastle calls them) was no reason that Cervantes should not smile at the matter of them; nor even a reason that, in another mood, he might not multiply them, deeply as he was tinctured with the essence of them. Quixote is the father of gentle ridicule, and at the same time the very depository and treasury of chivalry and highest notions. Marry, when somebody persuaded Cervantes that he meant only fun, and put him upon writing that unfortunate Second Part with the confederacies of that unworthy duke and most contemptible duchess, Cervantes sacrificed his instinct to his understanding.

We got your little book but last night, being at Enfield, to which place we came about a month since, and are having quiet holydays. Mary walks her twelve miles a day some days, and I my twenty on others. 'Tis all holiday with me now, you know. The change works admirably.

For literary news, in my poor way, I have a one-act farce going to be acted at the Haymarket; but when? is the question. 'Tis an extravaganza, and like enough to follow "Mr. H." "The London Magazine" has shifted its publishers once more, and I shall shift myself out of it. It is fallen. My ambition is not at present higher than to write nonsense for the play-houses, to eke out a somewhat contracted income. *Tempus erat.* There was a time, my dear Cornwallis, when the Muse, &c. But I am now in Mac Fleckno's predicament,—

"Promised a play, and dwindled to a farce."

Coleridge is better (was, at least, a few weeks since) than he has been for years. His accomplishing his book at last has been a source of vigour to him. We are on a half visit to his friend Allsop, at a Mrs. Leishman's, Enfield, but expect to be at Colebrooke Cottage in a week or so, where, or anywhere, I shall be always most happy to receive tidings from you. G. Dyer is in the height of an uxorious paradise. His honeymoon will not wane till he wax cold. Never

was a more happy pair, since Acme and Septimius, and longer. Farewell, with many thanks, dear S. Our loves to all round your Wrekin.

Your old friend, C. LAMB.

NOTE

[In the letter to Barton on page 700 Lamb continues or amplifies his remarks on his own letter-writing habits.

"Capillarians." The *New English Dictionary* gives Lamb's word in this connection as its sole example, meaning without stem.

"The poem"—Southey's *Tale of Paraguay*, 1825, which begins with an address to Jenner, the physiologist:—

Jenner! for ever shall thy honour'd name,

and is dedicated to Edith May Southey—

Edith! ten years are number'd, since the day.

Edith Southey was born in 1804. The dedication was dated 1814.

John May was Southey's friend and correspondent. It was not he that had died.

"The Vesper Bell"—"The Chapel Bell," which was not in the *Annual Anthology*, but in Southey's *Poems*, 1797. Dear George would perhaps be Burnett, who was at Oxford with Southey when the verses were written (see the Appendix, page 956).

"The compliment to the translatress." Southey took his *Tale of Paraguay* from Dobrizhoffer's *History of the Abipones*, which his niece, Sara Coleridge, had translated (see Letter 293 and note). Southey remarks in the poem that could Dobrizhoffer have foreseen by whom his words were to be turned into English, he would have been as pleased as when he won the ear of the Empress Queen.

"Landor's . . . allegorising." Landor, in the conversation between "Peter Leopold and the President du Paty," makes President du Paty say that Cervantes had deeper purpose than the satirising of knight-errants, Don Quixote standing for the Emperor Charles V. and Sancho Panza symbolising the people. Southey quoted the passage in the Notes to the Proem. Lamb's *Elia* essay on the "Defect of Imagination" (see Vol. II., page 233) amplifies this criticism of Don Quixote.

Strap and Random are in Smollett's *Roderick Random*, and Partridge and Lady Bellaston in Fielding's *Tom Jones*.

"Madge Newcastle." Lamb's oft-extolled Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle.

"A one-act farce." This was, I imagine, "The Pawnbroker's Daughter," although that is in two acts. It was not, however, acted.

"My dear Cornwallis."

> There was a time, my dear Cornwallis, when
> The Muse would take me on her airy wing.

From a poem by Sneyd Davis to the Hon. and Rev. F.C. in Dodsley's *Collection of Poems by Several Hands*, vol. vi., p. 138. Edition 1766.

"Mac Fleckno's predicament." See Dryden's "Mac-Flecknoe," line 182.

George Dyer had just been married to the widow of a solicitor who lived opposite him in Clifford's Inn.

"Acme and Septimius." See Catullus, Carm. 45, "De Acme et Septimio;" the story of two fond and doating lovers.

Here should come three unimportant notes to Hone with reference to the *Every-Day Book*—adding an invitation to Enfield to be shown "dainty spots."]

LETTER 362

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[P.M. Sept. 9 1825].

MY dear Allsop—We are exceedingly grieved for your loss. When your note came, my sister went to Pall Mall, to find you, and saw Mrs. L. and was a little comforted to find Mrs. A. had returned to Enfield before the distresful event. I am very feeble, can scarce move a pen; got home from Enfield on the Friday, and on Monday followg was laid up with a most violent nervous fever second this summer, have had Leeches to my Temples, have not had, nor can not get, a night's sleep. So you will excuse more from

Yours truly,
C. LAMB.

Islington, 9 Sept.

Our most kind remembces to poor Mrs. Allsop. A line to say how you both are will be most acceptable.

NOTE

[Allsop's loss was, I imagine, the death of one of his children.]

LETTER 363

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[P.M. Sept. 24, 1825.]

MY dear Allsop—Come not near this unfortunate roof yet a while. My disease is clearly but slowly going. Field is an excellent attendant. But Mary's anxieties have overturned her.

She has her old Miss James with her, without whom I should not feel a support in the world. We keep in separate apartments, and must weather it. Let me know all of your healths. Kindest love to Mrs. Allsop. C. LAMB.

Saturday.

Can you call at Mrs. Burney 26 James Street, and *tell her*, & that I can see no one here in this state. If Martin return—if well enough, I will meet him some where, *don't let him come.*

NOTE

[Field was Henry Field, Barron Field's brother.

Here should come a note from Lamb to Hone, dated September 30, 1825, in which Lamb describes the unhappy state of the house at Colebrooke Row, with himself and his sister both ill.

Here also should come a similar note to William Ayrton.

On October 18 Lamb sends Hone the first "bit of writing" he has done "these many weeks."]

LETTER 364

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM HONE

[P.M. Oct. 24, 1825.]

I SEND a scrap. Is it worth postage? My friends are fairly surprised that you should set me down so unequivocally for an ass, as you have done, Page 1358.

HERE HE IS
what follows?
THE ASS

Call you this friendship?

Mercy! What a dose you have sent me of Burney!—a perfect *opening* * draught.

* A Pun here is intended.

NOTE

[This is written on the back of the MS. "*In re* Squirrels" for Hone's *Every-Day Book* (see Vol. I. of this edition, page 306). Lamb's previous contribution had been "The Ass" which Hone had introduced with a few words.]

LETTER 365

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[Dec. 5, 1825.]

DEAR A.—You will be glad to hear that *we* are at home to visitors; not too many or noisy. Some fine day shortly Mary will surprise Mrs. Allsop. The weather is not seasonable for formal engagements.

Yours *most ever*,
C. LAMB.

Satrd.

NOTE

[Here should come a note to Manning at Totteridge, signed Charles and Mary Lamb, and dated December 10, 1825. It indicates that both are well again, and hoping to see Manning at Colebrooke.]

LETTER 366

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES OLLIER

[No date. ? Dec., 1825.]

DEAR O.—I leave it *entirely to Mr. Colburn;* but if not too late, I think the Proverbs had better have L. signd to them and reserve *Elia* for Essays *more Eliacal.* May I trouble you to send my Magazine, not to Norris, but H. C. Robinson Esq. King's bench walks, instead.

Yours truly
C. LAMB.

My friend Hood, a prime genius and hearty fellow, brings this.

NOTE

[Lamb's "Popular Fallacies" began in the *New Monthly Magazine* in January, 1826. Henry Colburn was the publisher of that magazine, which had now obtained Lamb's regular services. The nominal editor was Campbell, the poet, who was assisted by Cyrus Redding. Ollier seems to have been a sub-editor.]

LETTER 367

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[See Note].

DEAR Allsop—I acknowledge with thanks the receipt of a draft on Messrs. Wms. for £81 : 11 : 3 which I haste to cash in the present alarming state of the money market. Hurst and Robinson gone. I have imagined a chorus of ill-used authors singing on the occasion :

What should we when Booksellers break ?
We should rejoice
da Capo.

We regret exceedly. Mrs. Allsop's being unwell. Mary or both will come and see her soon. The frost is cruel, and we have both colds. I take Pills again, which battle with your wine & victory hovers doubtful. By the bye, tho' not disinclined to presents I remember our bargain to take a dozen at sale price and must demur. With once again thanks and best loves to Mrs. A.

Turn over—Yours, C. LAMB.

NOTE

[This is dated in *Harper's Magazine* January 7, 1826. I have since discovered that the date is January 17, 1825.

Hurst and Robinson were publishers. Lamb (see Letter 381) took the idea for his chorus from Davenant's version of "Macbeth" which he described in *The Spectator* in 1828 (see Vol. I. of the present edition, page 322). It is there a chorus of witches—

We should rejoice when good kings bleed.]

LETTERS 368 AND 369

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES OLLIER

Colebrook Cottage, Colebrook Row,
Tuesday [early 1826].

DEAR Ollier,—I send you two more proverbs, which will be the last of this batch, unless I send you one more by the post on THURSDAY ; none will come after that day ; so do not leave any open room in that case. Hood sups with me to-night. Can you come and eat grouse ? 'Tis not often I offer at delicacies.

Yours most kindly, C. LAMB.

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES OLLIER

January, 1826.

DEAR O.,—We lamented your absence last night. The grouse were piquant, the backs incomparable. You must come in to cold mutton and oysters some evening. Name your evening; though I have qualms at the distance. Do you never leave early? My head is very queerish, and indisposed for much company; but we will get Hood, that half Hogarth, to meet you. The scrap I send should come in AFTER the "Rising with the Lark."

Yours truly.

Colburn, I take it, pays postages.

NOTE

[The scrap was the Fallacy "That we Should Lie Down with the Lamb," which has perhaps the rarest quality of the series.

Here perhaps should come two further notes to Ollier, referring to some articles on Chinese jests by Manning.]

LETTER 370

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. February 7, 1826.]

My kind remembrances to your daughter and A. K. always.

DEAR B. B.—I got your book not more than five days ago, so am not so negligent as I must have appeared to you with a fortnight's sin upon my shoulders. I tell you with sincerity that I think you have completely succeeded in what you intended to do. What is poetry may be disputed. These are poetry to me at least. They are concise, pithy, and moving. Uniform as they are, and unhistorify'd, I read them thro' at two sittings without one sensation approaching to tedium. I do not know that among your many kind presents of this nature this is not my favourite volume. The language is never lax, and there is a unity of design and feeling, you wrote them *with love*—to avoid the cox-*combical* phrase, con amore. I am particularly pleased with the "Spiritual Law," page 34-5. It reminded me of Quarles, and Holy Mr. Herbert, as Izaak Walton calls him: the two best, if not only, of our devotional poets, tho' some prefer Watts, and some *Tom Moore*.

I am far from well or in my right spirits, and shudder at pen and ink work. I poke out a monthly crudity for Colburn in his magazine, which I call "Popular Fallacies," and periodically crush a proverb or two, setting up my folly against the wisdom of nations. Do you see the "New Monthly"?

One word I must object to in your little book, and it recurs more than once—FADELESS is no genuine compound; loveless is, because love is a noun as well as verb, but what is a fade?—and I do not quite like whipping the Greek drama upon the back of "Genesis," page 8. I do not like praise handed in by disparagement: as I objected to a side censure on Byron, etc., in the lines on Bloomfield: with these poor cavils excepted, your verses are without a flaw.

C. LAMB.

NOTE

[Barton's new book was *Devotional Verses: founded on, and illustrative of Select Texts of Scripture*, 1826. See the Appendix, page 957, for "The Spiritual Law."

"Holy Mr. Herbert." Writing to Lady Beaumont in 1826 Coleridge says: "My dear old friend Charles Lamb and I differ widely (and in point of taste and moral feeling this is a rare occurrence) in our estimate and liking of George Herbert's sacred poems. He greatly prefers Quarles—nay, he dislikes Herbert".

Barton whipped the Greek drama on the back of Genesis in the following stanza, referring to Abraham's words before preparing to sacrifice Isaac:—

> Brief colloquy, yet more sublime,
> To every feeling heart,
> Than all the boast of classic time,
> Or Drama's proudest art:
> Far, far beyond the Grecian stage,
> Or Poesy's most glowing page.

For Lamb's reference to Byron see Letter 311.]

LETTER 371

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES OLLIER

[P.M. March 16, 1826.]

DR Ollier if not too late, pray omit the last paragraph in "Actor's Religion," which is clumsy. It will then end with the word Mugletonian. I shall not often trouble you in this manner, but I am suspicious of this article as lame.

C. LAMB.

NOTE

["The Religion of Actors" was printed in the *New Monthly Magazine* for April, 1826. The essay ends at "Muggletonian." See Vol. I. of this edition, page 287.]

LETTER 372

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. March 20, 1826.]

DEAR B. B.—You may know my letters by the paper and the folding. For the former, I live on scraps obtained in charity from an old friend whose stationary is a permanent perquisite; for folding, I shall do it neatly when I learn to tye my neckcloths. I surprise most of my friends by writing to them on ruled paper, as if I had not got past pothooks and hangers. Sealing wax, I have none on my establishment. Wafers of the coarsest bran supply its place. When my Epistles come to be weighed with Pliny's, however superior to the Roman in delicate irony, judicious reflexions, etc., his gilt post will bribe over the judges to him. All the time I was at the E. I. H. I never mended a pen; I now cut 'em to the stumps, marring rather than mending the primitive goose quill. I cannot bear to pay for articles I used to get for nothing. When Adam laid out his first penny upon nonpareils at some stall in Mesopotamos, I think it went hard with him, reflecting upon his old goodly orchard, where he had so many for nothing. When I write to a Great man, at the Court end, he opens with surprise upon a naked note, such as Whitechapel people interchange, with no sweet degrees of envelope: I never inclosed one bit of paper in another, nor understand the rationale of it. Once only I seald with borrow'd wax, to set Walter Scott a wondering, sign'd with the imperial quarterd arms of England, which my friend Field gives in compliment to his descent in the female line from O. Cromwell. It must have set his antiquarian curiosity upon watering. To your questions upon the currency, I refer you to Mr. Robinson's last speech, where, if you can find a solution, I cannot. I think this tho' the best ministry we ever stumbled upon. Gin reduced four shillings in the gallon, wine 2 shillings in the quart. This comes home to men's minds and bosoms. My tirade against visitors was not meant *particularly* at you or A. K. I scarce know what I meant, for I do not just now feel the grievance. I wanted to

make an *article*. So in another thing I talkd of somebody's *insipid wife*, without a correspondent object in my head: and a good lady, a friend's wife, whom I really *love* (don't startle, I mean in a licit way) has looked shyly on me ever since. The blunders of personal application are ludicrous. I send out a character every now and then, on purpose to exercise the ingenuity of my friends. "Popular Fallacies" will go on; that word concluded is an erratum, I suppose, for continued. I do not know how it got stuff'd in there. A little thing without name will also be printed on the Religion of the Actors, but it is out of your way, so I recommend you, with true Author's hypocrisy, to skip it. We are about to sit down to Roast beef, at which we could wish A. K., B. B., and B. B.'s pleasant daughter to be humble partakers. So much for my hint at visitors, which was scarcely calculated for droppers in from Woodbridge. The sky does not drop such larks every day.

My very kindest wishes to you all three, with my sister's best love. C. LAMB.

NOTE

["Mr. Robinson's last speech." Frederick John Robinson, afterwards Earl of Ripon, then Chancellor of the Exchequer under the Earl of Liverpool. The Government had decided to check the use of paper-money by stopping the issue of notes for less than £5; and Robinson had made a speech on the subject on February 10. The motion was carried, but to some extent was compromised. It was Robinson who, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, found the money for building the new British Museum and purchasing Angerstein's pictures as the beginning of the National Gallery.

"Men's minds and bosoms." Bacon's phrase in the Dedication to the *Essays*: "come home to men's business and bosoms."

"My tirade against visitors"—the Popular Fallacy "That Home is Home," in the *New Monthly Magazine* for March.

"Somebody's *insipid wife*." In the Popular Fallacy "That You Must Love Me and Love My Dog," in the February number, Lamb had spoken of Honorius' "vapid wife."

Barton and his daughter visited Lamb at Colebrooke Cottage somewhen about this time. Mrs. FitzGerald, in 1893, wrote out for me her recollections of the day. Lamb, who was alone, opened the door himself. He sent out for a luncheon of oysters. The books on his shelves, Mrs. FitzGerald remembered, retained the price-labels of the stalls where he had bought them. She also remembered a portrait over the fireplace. This would be the Milton. In the *Gem* for 1831 was a poem by Barton, "To Milton's Portrait in a Friend's Parlour."]

LETTER 373

CHARLES LAMB TO S. T. COLERIDGE

March 22nd, 1826.

DEAR C.,—We will with great pleasure be with you on Thursday in the next week early. Your finding out my style in your nephew's pleasant book is surprising to me. I want eyes to descry it. You are a little too hard upon his morality, though I confess he has more of Sterne about him than of Sternhold. But he saddens into excellent sense before the conclusion. Your query shall be submitted to Miss Kelly, though it is obvious that the pantomime, when done, will be more easy to decide upon than in proposal. I say, do it by all means. I have Decker's play by me, if you can filch anything out of it. Miss Gray, with her kitten eyes, is an actress, though she shows it not at all, and pupil to the former, whose gestures she mimics in comedy to the disparagement of her own natural manner, which is agreeable. It is funny to see her bridling up her neck, which is native to F. K.; but there is no setting another's manners upon one's shoulders any more than their head. I am glad you esteem Manning, though you see but his husk or shrine. He discloses not, save to select worshippers, and will leave the world without any one hardly but me knowing how stupendous a creature he is. I am perfecting myself in the "Ode to Eton College" against Thursday, that I may not appear unclassic. I have just discovered that it is much better than the "Elegy."

In haste, C. L.

P.S.—I do not know what to say to your *latest* theory about Nero being the Messiah, though by all accounts he was a 'nointed one.

Note

["Next week early." Canon Ainger's text here has: "May we venture to bring Emma with us?"

"Your nephew's pleasant book"—Henry Nelson Coleridge's *Six Months in the West Indies in 1825*. In the last chapter but one of the book is an account of the slave question, under the title "Planters and Slaves."

"Sternhold"—Thomas Sternhold, the coadjutor of Hopkins in paraphrasing the Psalms.

"The pantomime." Coleridge seems to have had some project

for modernising Dekker for Fanny Kelly. Mr. Dykes Campbell suggests that the play to be treated was "Old Fortunatus."

"Miss Gray." I have found nothing of this Lady.

"Manning." Writing to Robert Lloyd twenty-five years earlier Lamb had said of Manning: "A man of great Power—an enchanter almost.—Far beyond Coleridge or any man in power of impressing—when he gets you alone he can act the wonders of Egypt. Only he is lazy, and does not always put forth all his strength; if he did, I know no man of genius at all comparable to him."

"Against Thursday." Coleridge was "at home" on Thursday evenings. Possibly on this occasion some one interested in Gray was to be there, or the allusion may be a punning one to Miss Gray.

"Your *latest* theory." I cannot explain this.

"'Nointed one"—"Anoint: ironically to beat soundly, to baste. In the North they say humorously 'to anoint with the sap of a hazel rod.' 'An anointed rogue' means either one who has been well thrashed, or who deserves to be. In the latter case it expresses the opinion and wish of the speaker" (Skeat, *A Student's Pastime*).]

LETTER 374

CHARLES LAMB TO H. F. CARY

April 3, 1826.

DEAR Sir,—It is whispered me that you will not be unwilling to look into our doleful hermitage. Without more preface, you will gladden our cell by accompanying our old chums of the London, Darley and Allan Cunningham, to Enfield on Wednesday. You shall have hermit's fare, with talk as seraphical as the novelty of the divine life will permit, with an innocent retrospect to the world which we have left, when I will thank you for your hospitable offer at Chiswick, and with plain hermit reasons evince the necessity of abiding here.

Without hearing from you, then, you shall give us leave to expect you. I have long had it on my conscience to invite you, but spirits have been low; and I am indebted to chance for this awkward but most sincere invitation.

Yours, with best love to Mrs. Cary, C. LAMB.

Darley knows all about the coaches. Oh, for a Museum in the wilderness!

NOTE

[Cary, who had been afternoon lecturer at Chiswick and curate of the Savoy, this year took up his post as Assistant Keeper of the Printed Books at the British Museum. George Darley, who wrote some notes to Cary's *Dante*, we have met. Allan Cunningham was the Scotch poet and the author of the Lives of the Painters, the "Giant" of the *London Magazine*. The Lambs seem to have been spending some days at Enfield.

Here should come a note from Lamb to Ollier asking for a copy of the April *New Monthly Magazine* for himself, and one for his Chinese friend (Manning) if his jests are in.]

LETTER 375

CHARLES LAMB TO VINCENT NOVELLO

[P.M. May 9, 1826.]

DEAR N. You will not expect us to-morrow, I am sure, while these damn'd North Easters continue. We must wait the Zephyrs' pleasures. By the bye, I was at Highgate on Wensday, the only one of the Party.

Yours truly C. LAMB.

Summer, as my friend Coleridge waggishly writes, has set in with its usual severity.

Kind remembces to Mrs. Novello &c.

LETTER 376

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. May 16, 1826.]

DEAR B. B.—I have had no spirits lately to begin a letter to you, though I am under obligations to you (how many!) for your neat little poem. 'Tis just what it professes to be, a simple tribute in chaste verse, serious and sincere. I do not know how Friends will relish it, but we out-lyers, Honorary Friends, like it very well. I have had my head and ears stuff'd up with the East winds. A continual ringing in my brain of bells jangled, or The Spheres touchd by some raw Angel. It is not George 3 trying

the 100th psalm? I get my music for nothing. But the weather seems to be softening, and will thaw my stunnings. Coleridge writing to me a week or two since begins his note—"Summer has set in with its usual Severity." A cold Summer is all I know of disagreeable in cold. I do not mind the utmost rigour of real Winter, but these smiling hypocrites of Mays wither me to death. My head has been a ringing Chaos, like the day the winds were made, before they submitted to the discipline of a weathercock, before the Quarters were made. In the street, with the blended noises of life about me, I hear, and my head is lightened, but in a room the hubbub comes back, and I am deaf as a Sinner. Did I tell you of a pleasant sketch Hood has done, which he calls *Very Deaf Indeed?* It is of a good naturd stupid looking old gentleman, whom a footpad has stopt, but for his extreme deafness cannot make him understand what he wants; the unconscious old gentleman is extending his ear-trumpet very complacently, and the fellow is firing a pistol into it to make him hear, but the ball will pierce his skull sooner than the report reach his sensorium. I chuse a very little bit of paper, for my ear hisses when I bend down to write. I can hardly read a book, for I miss that small soft voice which the idea of articulated words raises (almost imperceptibly to you) in a silent reader. I seem too deaf to see what I read. But with a touch or two of returning Zephyr my head will melt. What Lyes you Poets tell about the May! It is the most ungenial part of the Year, cold crocuses, cold primroses, you take your blossoms in Ice—a painted Sun—

> Unmeaning joy around appears,
> And Nature smiles as if she sneers.

It is ill with me when I begin to look which way the wind sits. Ten years ago I literally did not know the point from the broad end of the Vane, which it was the [? that] indicated the Quarter. I hope these ill winds have blowd *over* you, as they do thro' me. Kindest remembces to you and yours. C. L.

NOTE

["Your neat little poem." It is not possible to trace this poem. Probably, I think, the "Stanzas written for a blank leaf in Sewell's History of the Quakers," printed in *A Widow's Tale*, 1827.

"George 3." Byron's "Vision of Judgment" thus closes:—

> King George slipp'd into Heaven for one;
> And when the tumult dwindled to a calm,
> I left him practising the hundredth psalm.

This is Hood's sketch, in his *Whims and Oddities*:—

"Very deaf indeed."

"Unmeaning joy around appears . . ." I have not found this.]

LETTER 377

CHARLES LAMB TO S. T. COLERIDGE

June 1st, 1826.

DEAR Coleridge,—If I know myself, nobody more detests the display of personal vanity which is implied in the act of sitting for one's picture than myself. But the fact is, that the likeness which accompanies this letter was stolen from my person at one of my unguarded moments by some too partial artist, and my friends are pleased to think that he has not much flattered me. Whatever its merits may be, you, who have so great an interest in the original, will have a satisfaction in tracing the features of one that has so long esteemed you. There are times when in a friend's absence these graphic representations of him almost seem to bring back the man himself. The painter, whoever he was, seems to have taken me in one of those disengaged moments, if I may so term them, when the native character is so much more honestly displayed than can be possible in the restraints of an enforced sitting attitude. Perhaps it rather describes me as a thinking man than a man in the act of thought. Whatever its pretensions, I know it will be dear to you, towards whom I should wish my thoughts to flow in a sort of an undress rather than in the more studied graces of diction.

I am, dear Coleridge, yours sincerely, C. LAMB.

CHARLES LAMB (AGED 50)

FROM THE ETCHING BY BROOK PULHAM

First state

NOTE

[The portrait to which Lamb refers will be found opposite page 706. It was etched by Brook Pulham of the India House. It was this picture which so enraged Procter when he saw it in a print-shop (probably that referred to by Lamb in Letter 404) that he reprimanded the dealer.]

LETTERS 378 AND 379

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN BATES DIBDIN

Friday, some day in June, 1826. [P.M. June 30, 1826.]

DEAR D.—My first impulse upon opening your letter was pleasure at seeing your old neat hand, nine parts gentlemanly, with a modest dash of the clerical: my second a Thought, natural enough this hot weather, Am I to answer all this? why 'tis as long as those to the Ephesians and Galatians put together—I have counted the words for curiosity. But then Paul has nothing like the fun which is ebullient all over yours. I don't remember a good thing (good like yours) from the 1st Romans to the last of the Hebrews. I remember but one Pun in all the Evangely, and that was made by his and our master: Thou art Peter (that is Doctor Rock) and upon this rock will I build &c.; which sanctifies Punning with me against all gainsayers. I never knew an enemy to puns, who was not an ill-natured man. Your fair critic in the coach reminds me of a Scotchman who assured me that he did not see much in Shakspeare. I replied, I dare say *not*. He felt the equivoke, lookd awkward, and reddish, but soon returnd to the attack, by saying that he thought Burns was as good as Shakspeare: I said that I had no doubt he was—to a *Scotchman*. We exchangd no more words that day.—Your account of the fierce faces in the Hanging, with the presumed interlocution of the Eagle and the Tyger, amused us greatly. You cannot be so very bad, while you can pick mirth off from rotten walls. But let me hear you have escaped out of your oven. May the Form of the Fourth Person who clapt invisible wet blankets about the shoulders of Shadrach Meshach and Abednego, be with you in the fiery Trial. But get out of the frying pan. Your business, I take it, is bathing, not baking.

Let me hear that you have clamber'd up to Lover's Seat; it is as fine in that neighbourhood as Juan Fernandez, as lonely too, when the Fishing boats are not out; I have sat for hours, staring upon a shipless sea. The salt sea is never so grand as when it is left to

itself. One cock-boat spoils it. A sea-mew or two improves it. And go to the little church, which is a very protestant Loretto, and seems dropt by some angel for the use of a hermit, who was at once parishioner and a whole parish. It is not too big. Go in the night, bring it away in your portmanteau, and I will plant it in my garden. It must have been erected in the very infancy of British Christianity, for the two or three first converts; yet hath it all the appertenances of a church of the first magnitude, its pulpit, its pews, its baptismal font; a cathedral in a nutshell. Seven people would crowd it like a Caledonian Chapel. The minister that divides the word there, must give lumping pennyworths. It is built to the text of two or three assembled in my name. It reminds me of the grain of mustard seed. If the glebe land is proportionate, it may yield two potatoes. Tythes out of it could be no more split than a hair. Its First fruits must be its Last, for 'twould never produce a couple. It is truly the strait and narrow way, and few there be (of London visitants) that find it. The still small voice is surely to be found there, if any where. A sounding board is merely there for ceremony. It is secure from earthquakes, not more from sanctity than size, for 'twould feel a mountain thrown upon it no more than a taper-worm would. Go and see, but not without your spectacles. By the way, there's a capital farm house two thirds of the way to the Lover's Seat, with incomparable plum cake, ginger beer, etc. Mary bids me warn you not to read the Anatomy of Melancholy in your present *low way*. You'll fancy yourself a pipkin, or a headless bear, as Burton speaks of. You'll be lost in a maze of remedies for a labyrinth of diseasements, a plethora of cures. Read Fletcher; above all the Spanish Curate, the Thief or Little Nightwalker, the Wit Without Money, and the Lover's Pilgrimage. Laugh and come home fat. Neither do we think Sir T. Browne quite the thing for you just at present. Fletcher is as light as Soda water. Browne and Burton are too strong potions for an Invalid. And don't thumb or dirt the books. Take care of the bindings. Lay a leaf of silver paper under 'em, as you read them. And don't smoke tobacco over 'em, the leaves will fall in and burn or dirty their namesakes. If you find any dusty atoms of the Indian Weed crumbled up in the Beaumt and Fletcher, they are *mine*. But then, you know, so is the Folio also. A pipe and a comedy of Fletcher's the last thing of a night is the best recipe for light dreams and to scatter away Nightmares. Probatum est. But do as you like about the former. Only cut the Baker's. You will come home else all crust; Rankings must chip you before you can appear in his counting house. And my dear Peter Fin Junr., do contrive to see the sea at least once before you return. You'll be ask'd about it in the Old Jewry. It will appear singular not to

have seen it. And rub up your Muse, the family Muse, and send us a rhyme or so. Don't waste your wit upon that damn'd Dry Salter. I never knew but one Dry Salter, who could relish those mellow effusions, and he broke. You knew Tommy Hill, the wettest of dry salters. Dry Salters, what a word for this thirsty weather! I must drink after it. Here's to thee, my dear Dibdin, and to our having you again snug and well at Colebrooke. But our nearest hopes are to hear again from you shortly. An epistle only a quarter as agreeable as your last, would be a treat.

Yours most truly C. LAMB.

Timothy B. Dibdin, Esq.,
No. 9, Blucher Row,
Priory, Hastings.

NOTE

[Dibdin, who was in delicate health, had gone to Hastings to recruit, with a parcel of Lamb's books for company. He seems to have been lodged above the oven at a baker's. This letter contains Lamb's crowning description of Hollingdon Rural church (see also pages 617 and 648). I subjoin a cut of the building as it is to-day:—

"A Caledonian Chapel." Referring to the crowds that listened to Irving (see note on page 661).

"A headless bear." From the rhyming abstract of melancholy prefixed to the *Anatomy*.

"Peter Fin." A character in Jones' "Peter Finn's Trip to Brighton," 1822, as played by Liston.

"Tommy Hill." In the British Museum is preserved the following brief note addressed to Mr. Thomas Hill—probably the same. The date is between 1809 and 1817:—

"Dr Sir

"It is necessary *I see you sign*, can you step up to me 4 Inner Temple Lane this evening. I shall wait at home.

"Yours,
"C. Lamb."

I have no notion to what the note refers. It is quite likely, Mr. J. A. Rutter suggests, that Hill the drysalter, a famous busybody, and a friend of Theodore Hook, stood for the portrait of Tom Pry in Lamb's "Lepus Papers" (see Vol. I., page 498). S. C. Hall, in his *Book of Memories*, says of Hill that "his peculiar faculty was to find out what everybody did, from a minister of state to a stable-boy."]

LETTER 380

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN BATES DIBDIN

[P.M. July 14, 1826.]

BECAUSE you boast poetic Grandsire,
And rhyming kin, both Uncle and Sire,
Dost think that none but *their* Descendings
Can tickle folks with double endings?
I had a Dad, that would for half a bet
Have put down thine thro' half the Alphabet.
Thou, who would be Dan Prior the second,
For Dan Posterior must be reckon'd.
In faith, dear Tim, your rhymes are slovenly,
As a man may say, dough-baked and ovenly;
Tedious and long as two Long Acres,
And smell most vilely of the Baker's.
(I have been cursing every limb o' thee,
Because I could not hitch in *Timothy*.
Jack, Will, Tom, Dick's, a serious evil,
But Tim, plain Tim's—the very devil.)

Thou most incorrigible scribbler,
Right Watering place and cockney dribbler,
What *child*, that barely understands *A*
B, *C*, would ever dream that Stanza
Would tinkle into rhyme with "Plan, Sir"?
Go, go, you are not worth an answer.
I had a Sire, that at plain Crambo
Had hit you o'er the pate a damn'd blow.
How now? may I die game, and you die brass,
But I have stol'n a quip from Hudibras.
'Twas thinking on that fine old Suttler,
That was in faith a second Butler;
Had as queer rhymes as he, and subtler.
He would have put you to 't this weather
For rattling syllables together;
Rhym'd you to death, like "rats in Ireland,"
Except that he was born in High'r Land.
His chimes, not crampt like thine, and rung ill,
Had made Job split his sides on dunghill.
There was no limit to his merryings
At christ'nings, weddings, nay at buryings.
No undertaker would live near him,
Those grave practitioners did fear him;
Mutes, at his merry mops, turned "vocal,"
And fellows, hired for silence, "spoke all."
No *body* could be laid in cavity,
Long as he lived, with proper gravity.
His mirth-fraught eye had but to glitter,
And every mourner round must titter.
The Parson, prating of Mount Hermon,
Stood still to laugh, in midst of sermon.
The final Sexton (smile he *must* for him)
Could hardly get to "dust to dust" for him.
He lost three pall-bearers their livelyhood,
Only with simp'ring at his lively mood:
Provided that they fresh and neat came,
All jests were fish that to his net came.
He'd banter Apostolic castings,
As you jeer fishermen at Hastings.
When the fly bit, *like me*, he leapt-o'er-all,
And stood not much on what was scriptural.

P.S.

I had forgot, at Small Bohemia
(Enquire the way of your maid Euphemia)

Are sojourning, of all good fellows
The prince and princess,—the *Novellos*—
Pray seek 'em out, and give my love to 'em;
You'll find you'll soon be hand and glove to 'em.

In prose, Little Bohemia, about a mile from Hastings in the Hollingtun road, when you can get so far. Dear Dib, I find relief in a word or two of prose. In truth my rhymes come slow. You have "routh of 'em." It gives us pleasure to find you keep your good spirits. Your Letter did us good. Pray heaven you are out at last. Write quickly.

This letter will introduce you, if 'tis agreeable. Take a donkey. 'Tis Novello the Composer and his Wife, our very good friends.

C. L.

NOTE

[Dibdin must have sent the verses which Lamb asked for in the previous letter, and this is Lamb's reply. Pride of ancestry seems to have been the note of Dibdin's effort. Probably there is a certain amount of truth in Lamb's account of the resolute merriment of his father. It is not inconsistent with his description of Lovel in the *Elia* essay "The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple."

"Dan Prior"—Matthew Prior, the poet, "Dan" meaning "master" (a corruption of "dominus".)

"I have stol'n a quip." The manner rather than the precise matter, I think.

"Rats in Ireland." Rosalind says in "As You Like It" (III., 2, 181-188) "I was never so berhymed since . . . I was an Irish rat."

"Routh of 'em." From Burns' "Poem to J. S. . . . ." Verse 21—"rowth o' rhymes."

Here should come a letter from Lamb to the Rev. Edward Coleridge, Coleridge's nephew, dated July 19, 1826, printed by Mr. Hazlitt in Bohn's edition of the letters, not available for the present volume. It thanks the recipient for his kindness to the child of a friend of Lamb's, Samuel Anthony Bloxam, Coleridge having assisted in getting Frederick Bloxam into Eton (where he was a master) on the foundation. Samuel Bloxam and Lamb were at Christ's Hospital together.]

LETTER 381

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

[P.M. September 6, 1826.]

MY dear Wordsworth, The Bearer of this is my young friend Moxon, a young lad with a Yorkshire head, and a heart that would do honour to a more Southern county: no offence to West-

moreland. He is one of Longman's best hands, and can give you the best account of The Trade as 'tis now going; or stopping. For my part, the failure of a Bookseller is not the most unpalatable accident of mortality:

> sad but not saddest
> The desolation of a hostile city.

When Constable fell from heaven, and we all hoped Baldwin was next, I tuned a slight stave to the words in Macbeth (D'avenant's) to be sung by a Chorus of Authors,

> What should we do when Booksellers break?
> We should rejoyce.

Moxon is but a tradesman in the bud yet, and retains his virgin Honesty; Esto perpetua, for he is a friendly serviceable fellow, and thinks nothing of lugging up a Cargo of the Newest Novels once or twice a week from the Row to Colebrooke to gratify my Sister's passion for the newest things. He is her Bodley. He is author besides of a poem which for a first attempt is promising. It is made up of common images, and yet contrives to read originally. You see the writer felt all he pours forth, and has not palmed upon you expressions which he did not believe at the time to be more his own than adoptive. Rogers has paid him some proper compliments, with sound advice intermixed, upon a slight introduction of him by me; for which I feel obliged. Moxon has petition'd me by letter (for he had not the confidence to ask it in London) to introduce him to you during his holydays; pray pat him on the head, ask him a civil question or two about his verses, and favor him with your genuine autograph. He shall not be further troublesome. I think I have not sent any one upon a gaping mission to you a good while. We are all well, and I have at last broke the bonds of business a second time, never to put 'em on again. I pitch Colburn and his magazine to the divil. I find I can live without the necessity of writing, tho' last year I fretted myself to a fever with the hauntings of being starved. Those vapours are flown. All the difference I find is that I have no pocket money: that is, I must not pry upon an old book stall, and cull its contents as heretofore, but shoulders of mutton, Whitbread's entire, and Booth's best, abound as formerly.

I don't know whom or how many to send our love to, your household is so frequently divided, but a general health to all that may be fixed or wandering; stars, wherever. We read with pleasure some success (I forget quite what) of one of you at Oxford. Mrs. Monkhouse (. . . was one of you) sent us a kind letter some [months back], and we had the pleasure to [see] her in tolerable spirits, looking well and kind as in bygone days.

Do take pen, or put it into goodnatured hands Dorothean or Wordsworthian-female, or Hutchinsonian, to inform us of your present state, or possible proceedings. I am ashamed that this breaking of the long ice should be a letter of business. There is none circum præcordia nostra I swear by the honesty of pedantry, that wil I nil I pushes me upon scraps of Latin. We are yours cordially: CHAS. & MARY LAMB.

Septem^r. 1826.

NOTE

[In this letter, the first to Wordsworth for many months, we have the first mention of Edward Moxon, who was to be so closely associated with Lamb in the years to come. Moxon, a young Yorkshireman, educated at the Green Coat School, was then nearly twenty-five, and was already author of *The Prospect and other Poems*, dedicated to Rogers, who was destined to be a valuable patron. Moxon subsequently became Wordsworth's publisher.

"Sad but not saddest . . . " From "Samson Agonistes," lines 1560-1561, condensed.

"Constable . . . Baldwin." Archibald Constable & Co., Scott's publishers, failed in 1826 (see note on page 697). Baldwin was the first publisher of the *London Magazine*. See mention of him in Letter 290.

"*Esto perpetua*"—"Be thou perpetual!" Here referring, I take it, to Moxon's honesty—"May it be perpetual!"

"I pitch Colburn and his magazine." Lamb wrote nothing in the *New Monthly Magazine* after September, 1826.

"*Circum præcordia nostra.*" Chill about the midriff.

I append an abstract of what seems to be Lamb's first letter to Edward Moxon, obviously written before this date, but not out of place here. The letter seems to have accompanied the proof of an article on Lamb which he had corrected and was returning to Moxon. I quote from Sotheby's catalogue, May 13, 1903: "Were my own feelings consulted I should print it verbatim, but I won't hoax you, else I love a Lye. My biography, parentage, place of birth, is a strange mistake, part founded on some nonsense I wrote about Elia, and was true of him, the real Elia, whose name I took. . . . C. L. was born in Crown Office Row, Inner Temple in 1775. Admitted into Christs Hospital, 1782, where he was contemporary with T. F. M. [Thomas Fanshawe Middleton], afterwards Bishop of Calcutta, and with S. T. C. with the last of these two eminent scholars he has enjoyed an intimacy through life. On quitting this foundation he became a junior clerk in the South Sea House under his Elder Brother who died accountant there some years since. . . . I am not the author of the Opium Eater, &c." I have not succeeded in finding the article in question.]

LETTER 382

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN BATES DIBDIN

[P.M. September 9, 1826.]

An answer is requested.

Saturday.

DEAR D.—I have observed that a Letter is never more acceptable than when received upon a rainy day, especially a rainy Sunday; which moves me to send you somewhat, however short. This will find you sitting after Breakfast, which you will have prolonged as far as you can with consistency to the poor handmaid that has the reversion of the Tea Leaves; making two nibbles of your last morsel of *stale* roll (you cannot have hot new ones on the Sabbath), and reluctantly coming to an end, because when that is done, what can you do till dinner? You cannot go to the Beach, for the rain is drowning the sea, turning rank Thetis fresh, taking the brine out of Neptune's pickles, while mermaids sit upon rocks with umbrellas, their ivory combs sheathed for spoiling in the wet of waters foreign to them. You cannot go to the library, for it's shut. You are not religious enough to go to church. O it is worth while to cultivate piety to the gods, to have something to fill the heart up on a wet Sunday! You cannot cast accounts, for your ledger is being eaten up with moths in the Ancient Jewry. You cannot play at draughts, for there is none to play with you, and besides there is not a draught board in the house. You cannot go to market, for it closed last night. You cannot look in to the shops, their backs are shut upon you. You cannot read the Bible, for it is not good reading for the sick and the hypochondriacal. You cannot while away an hour with a friend, for you have no friend round that Wrekin. You cannot divert yourself with a stray acquaintance, for you have picked none up. You cannot bear the chiming of Bells, for they invite you to a banquet, where you are no visitant. You cannot cheer yourself with the prospect of a tomorrow's letter, for none come on Mondays. You cannot count those endless vials on the mantlepiece with any hope of making a variation in their numbers. You have counted your spiders: your Bastile is exhausted. You sit and deliberately curse your hard exile from all familiar sights and sounds. Old Ranking poking in his head unexpectedly would just now be as good to you as Grimaldi. Any thing to deliver you from this intolerable weight of Ennui. You are too ill to shake it off: not ill enough to submit to it, and to lie down as a lamb under it. The Tyranny of Sickness is nothing to the Cruelty of Convalescence: 'tis to have Thirty

NOTE

["I saved nothing." This is a rather curious statement; for Lamb, according to Procter, left £2000 at his death eight years later. He must have saved £200 a year from his pension of £441, living at the rate of £241 per annum, plus small earnings, for the rest of his life, and investing the £200 at 5 per cent. compound interest.

"Colburn had something of mine." The Popular Fallacy "That a Deformed Person is a Lord," not included by Lamb with the others when he reprinted them. Printed in Vol. I. of this edition, page 290.

"Reading at the Museum." Lamb had begun to visit the Museum every day to collect extracts from the Garrick plays for Hone's *Table Book*, 1827.

"A. K."—Anne Knight again.

The pleasant Yorkshire lad whom Mitford's secular air surprised was probably Moxon.

Here might come a purely business letter of no interest, from Lamb to Barton, preserved in the British Museum, relating to Mitford's jars.]

LETTER 384

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[No date. ? Sept., 1826.]

I HAVE had much trouble to find Field to-day. No matter. He was packing up for out of town. He has writ a handsomest letter, which you will transmit to Murry with your proof-sheets. Seal it.—

Yours C. L——.

Mrs. Hood will drink tea with us on Thursday at ½ past 5 *at Latest.*

N.B. I have lost my Museum reading today: a day with Titus: owing to your dam'd bisness.—I am the last to reproach anybody. I scorn it.

If you shall have the whole book ready soon, it will be best for Murry to see.

NOTE

[I am not clear as to what proof-sheets of Moxon's Lamb refers. His second book, *Christmas*, 1829, was issued through Hurst, Chance & Co.

Barron Field and John Murray were friends.

"A day with Titus." Can this (a friend suggests) have any connection with the phrase *Diem perditi?* There is no Titus play among the Garrick Extracts.]

LETTER 385

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[No postmark or date. Soon after preceding letter to Barton. 1826.]

DEAR *B. B.*—the *Busy Bee*, as Hood after Dr. Watts apostrophises thee, and well dost thou deserve it for thy labors in the Muses' gardens, wandering over parterres of Think-on-me's and Forget-me-nots, to a total impossibility of forgetting thee,—thy letter was acceptable, thy scruples may be dismissed, thou art Rectus in Curiâ, not a word more to be said, Verbum Sapienti and so forth, the matter is decided with a white stone, Classically, mark me, and the apparitions vanishd which haunted me, only the Cramp, Caliban's distemper, clawing me in the calvish part of my nature, makes me ever and anon roar Bullishly, squeak cowardishly, and limp cripple-ishly. Do I write quakerly and simply, 'tis my most Master Mathew-like intention to do it. See Ben Jonson.—I think you told me your acquaint^ce^ with the Drama was confin'd to Shakspeare and Miss Bailly: some read only Milton and Croly. The gap is as from an ananas to a Turnip. I have fighting in my head the plots characters situations and sentiments of 400 old Plays (bran new to me) which I have been digesting at the Museum, and my appetite sharpens to twice as many more, which I mean to course over this winter. I can scarce avoid Dialogue fashion in this letter. I soliloquise my meditations, and habitually speak dramatic blank verse without meaning it. Do you see Mitford? he will tell you something of my labors. Tell him I am sorry to have mist seeing him, to have talk'd over those OLD TREASURES. I am still more sorry for his missing Pots. But I shall be sure of the earliest intelligence of the Lost Tribes. His Sacred Specimens are a thankful addition to my shelves. Marry, I could wish he had been more careful of corrigenda. I have discover'd certain which have slipt his Errata. I put 'em in the next page, as perhaps thou canst transmit them to him. For what purpose, but to grieve him (which yet I should be sorry to do), but then it shews my learning, and the excuse is complimentary, as it implies their correction in a future Edition. His own things in the book are magnificent, and as an old Christ's Hospitaller I was particularly refreshd with his eulogy on our Edward. Many of the choice excerpta were new to me. Old Christmas is a coming, to the confusion of Puritans, Muggletonians, Anabaptists, Quakers, and that Unwassailing Crew. He cometh not with his wonted gait, he is shrunk 9 inches in the girth, but is yet a Lusty fellow. Hood's book is mighty clever, and went off 600 copies the 1st day. Sion's Songs do not disperse so

quickly. The next leaf is for Revd J. M. In this ADIEU thine briefly in a tall friendship C. LAMB.

NOTE

[Barton's letter, to which this is an answer, not being preserved, we do not know what his scruples were. B. B. was a great contributor to annuals.

"*Rectus in Curiâ.*" A law phrase, "Upright in the court."

"*Verbum Sapienti*"—"*Verbum sat sapienti*"—"A word to the wise is sufficient."

"With a white stone." In trials at law a white stone was cast as a vote for acquittal, a black stone for condemnation (see Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 15, 41).

"Caliban's distemper":—

Prospero (*to Caliban*). To-night thou shalt have cramps.
"Tempest," I., 2, 325.

"Master Mathew"—in Ben Jonson's "Every Man in His Humour."

"Croly"—the Rev. George Croly (1780-1860), of the *Literary Gazette*, author of *The Angel of the World* and other pretentious poems.

"Mitford's Sacred Specimens"—*Sacred Specimens Selected from the Early English Poets*, 1827. The last poem, by Mitford himself, was "Lines Written under the Portrait of Edward VI."

"Hood's book"—*Whims and Oddities*, second series, 1827.]

LETTERS 386 AND 387

CHARLES LAMB TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

Colebrooke Row, Islington,
Saturday, 20th Jan., 1827.

DEAR Robinson,—I called upon you this morning, and found that you were gone to visit a dying friend. I had been upon a like errand. Poor Norris has been lying dying for now almost a week, such is the penalty we pay for having enjoyed a strong constitution! Whether he knew me or not, I know not, or whether he saw me through his poor glazed eyes; but the group I saw about him I shall not forget. Upon the bed, or about it, were assembled his wife and two daughters, and poor deaf Richard, his son, looking doubly stupified. There they were, and seemed to have been sitting all the week. I could only reach out a hand to Mrs. Norris. Speak-

ing was impossible in that mute chamber. By this time I hope it is all over with him. In him I have a loss the world cannot make up. He was my friend and my father's friend all the life I can remember. I seem to have made foolish friendships ever since. Those are friendships which outlive a second generation. Old as I am waxing, in his eyes I was still the child he first knew me. To the last he called me Charley. I have none to call me Charley now. He was the last link that bound me to the Temple. You are but of yesterday. In him seem to have died the old plainness of manners and singleness of heart. Letters he knew nothing of, nor did his reading extend beyond the pages of the "Gentleman's Magazine." Yet there was a pride of literature about him from being amongst books (he was librarian), and from some scraps of doubtful Latin which he had picked up in his office of entering students, that gave him very diverting airs of pedantry. Can I forget the erudite look with which, when he had been in vain trying to make out a black-letter text of Chaucer in the Temple Library, he laid it down and told me that—"in those old books, Charley, there is sometimes a deal of very indifferent spelling;" and seemed to console himself in the reflection! His jokes, for he had his jokes, are now ended, but they were old trusty perennials, staples that pleased after *decies repetita*, and were always as good as new. One song he had, which was reserved for the night of Christmas-day, which we always spent in the Temple. It was an old thing, and spoke of the flat bottoms of our foes and the possibility of their coming over in darkness, and alluded to threats of an invasion many years blown over; and when he came to the part

> "We'll still make 'em run, and we'll still make 'em sweat,
> In spite of the devil and Brussels Gazette!"

his eyes would sparkle as with the freshness of an impending event. And what is the "Brussels Gazette" now? I cry while I enumerate these trifles. "How shall we tell them in a stranger's ear?" His poor good girls will now have to receive their afflicted mother in an inaccessible hovel in an obscure village in Herts, where they have been long struggling to make a school without effect; and poor deaf Richard—and the more helpless for being so—is thrown on the wide world.

My first motive in writing, and, indeed, in calling on you, was to ask if you were enough acquainted with any of the Benchers, to lay a plain statement before them of the circumstances of the family. I almost fear not, for you are of another hall. But if you can oblige me and my poor friend, who is now insensible to any favours, pray exert yourself. You cannot say too much good of poor Norris and his poor wife.

Yours ever, CHARLES LAMB.

NOTE

[This letter, describing the death of Randal Norris, Sub-Treasurer and Librarian of the Inner Temple, was printed with only very slight alterations in Hone's *Table Book*, 1827, and again in the *Last Essays of Elia*, 1833, under the title "A Death-Bed." It was, however, taken out of the second edition, and "Confessions of a Drunkard" substituted, in deference to the wishes of Norris's family. Mrs. Norris, as I have said, was a native of Widford, where she had known Mrs. Field, Lamb's grandmother. With her son Richard, who was deaf and peculiar, Mrs. Norris moved to Widford again, where the daughters, Miss Betsy and Miss Jane, had opened a school—Goddard House; which they retained until a legacy restored the family prosperity. Soon after that they both married, each a farmer named Tween. They survived until quite recently.

Mrs. Coe, an old scholar at the Misses Norris's school in the twenties, gave me, in 1902, some reminiscences of those days, from which I quote a passage or so:—

When he joined the Norrises' dinner-table he kept every one laughing. Mr. Richard sat at one end, and some of the school children would be there too. One day Mr. Lamb gave every one a fancy name all round the table, and made a verse on each. "You are so-and-so," he said, "and you are so-and-so," adding the rhyme. "What's he saying? What are you laughing at?" Mr. Richard asked testily, for he was short-tempered. Miss Betsy explained the joke to him, and Mr. Lamb, coming to his turn, said—only he said it in verse—"Now, Dick, it's your turn. I shall call you Gruborum; because all you think of is your food and your stomach." Mr. Richard pushed back his chair in a rage and stamped out of the room. "Now I've done it," said Mr. Lamb: "I must go and make friends with my old chum. Give me a large plate of pudding to take to him." When he came back he said, "It's all right. I thought the pudding would do it." Mr. Lamb and Mr. Richard never got on very well, and Mr. Richard didn't like his teasing ways at all; but Mr. Lamb often went for long walks with him, because no one else would. He did many kind things like that.

There used to be a half-holiday when Mr. Lamb came, partly because he would force his way into the schoolroom and make seriousness impossible. His head would suddenly appear at the door in the midst of lessons, with "Well, Betsy! How do, Jane?" "O, Mr. Lamb!" they would say, and that was the end of work for that day. He was really rather naughty with the children. One of his tricks was to teach them a new kind of catechism (Mrs. Coe does not remember it, but we may rest assured, I fear, that it was secular), and he made a great fuss with Lizzie Hunt for her skill in saying the Lord's Prayer backwards, which he had taught her.

"*Decies repetita*" (Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 365)—"Haec decies repetita placebit"—"Ten times repeated will please."

"We'll still make 'em run . . ." Canon Ainger says that the old song is the original version of "Hearts of Oak," printed in the *Universal Magazine*, March, 1760, and sung in "Harlequin's Invasion."

"How shall we tell them in a stranger's ear?" A quotation from Lamb himself, in the lines "Written soon after the Preceding Poem," in 1798 (see Vol. V., page 22).]

CHARLES LAMB TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

[No date. Jan. 20, 1827.]

DEAR R. N. is dead. I have writ as nearly as I could to look like a letter meant for *your eye only*. Will it do? Could you distantly hint (do as your own judgment suggests) that if his son could be got in as Clerk to the new Subtreasurer, it would be all his father wish'd? But I leave that to you. I don't want to put you upon anything disagreeable.

Yours thankfully

C. L.

NOTE

[The reference at the beginning is to the preceding letter, which was probably enclosed with this note.]

LETTERS 388 AND 389

CHARLES LAMB TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

[Dated by H. C. R. Jan. 29, 1827.]

DEAR Robinson, If you have not seen Mr. Gurney, leave him quite alone for the present, I have seen Mr. Jekyll, who is as friendly as heart can desire, he entirely approves of my formula of petition, and gave your very reasons for the propriety of the "little village of Hertfshire." Now, Mr. G. might not approve of it, and then we should clash. Also, Mr. J. wishes it to be presented next week, and Mr. G. might fix earlier, which would be aukward. Mr. J. was so civil to me, that I *think it would be better* NOT *for you to show him that letter you intended*. Nothing can increase his zeal in the cause of poor Mr. Norris. Mr. Gardiner will see you with this, and learn from you all about it, & consult, if you have seen Mr. G. & he has fixed a time, how to put it off. Mr. J. is most friendly to the boy: I think you had better not teaze the Treasurer any more about *him*, as it may make him less friendly to the Petition

Yours Ever

C. L.

NOTE

[Writing to Dorothy Wordsworth on February 13, 1827, Robinson says: "The Lambs are well. I have been so busy that I have not lately seen them. Charles has been occupied about the affair of the widow of his old friend Norris whose death he has felt. But the health of both is good."

Gurney would probably be John Gurney (afterwards Baron Gurney), the counsel and judge. Jekyll was Joseph Jekyll, the wit, mentioned by Lamb in his essay on "The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple."]

CHARLES LAMB TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

[Dated by H. C. R. Jan., 1827.]

DEAR R. do not say any thing to Mr. G. about the day *or* Petition, for Mr. Jekyll wishes it to be next week, and thoroughly approves of my formula, and Mr. G. might not, and then they will clash. Only speak to him of Gardner's wish to have the Lad. Mr. Jekyll was excessive friendly. C. L.

NOTE

[The matter referred to is still the Norrises' welfare. Mr. Hazlitt says that an annuity of £80 was settled by the Inn on Mrs. Norris.

Here perhaps should come a letter from Lamb to Allsop, printed by Mr. Fitzgerald, urging Allsop to go to Highgate to see Coleridge and tell him of the unhappy state of his, Allsop's, affairs. In Crabb Robinson's *Diary* for February 1, 1827, I read: "I went to Lamb. Found him in trouble about his friend Allsop, who is a ruined man. Allsop is a very good creature who has been a generous friend to Coleridge." Writing of his troubles in *Letters, Conversations and Recollections of S. T. Coleridge*, Allsop says: "Charles Lamb, Charles and Mary Lamb, 'union is partition,' were never wanting in the hour of need."]

LETTER 390

CHARLES LAMB TO B. R. HAYDON

[March, 1827.]

DEAR Raffaele Haydon,—Did the maid tell you I came to see your picture, not on Sunday but the day before? I think the face and bearing of the Bucephalus-tamer very noble, his flesh

too effeminate or painty. The skin of the female's back kneeling is much more carnous. I had small time to pick out praise or blame, for two lord-like Bucks came in, upon whose strictures my presence seemed to impose restraint: I plebeian'd off therefore.

I think I have hit on a subject for you, but can't swear it was never executed,—I never heard of its being,—"Chaucer beating a Franciscan Friar in Fleet Street." Think of the old dresses, houses, &c. "It seemeth that both these learned men (Gower and Chaucer) were of the Inner Temple; for not many years since Master Buckley did see a record in the same house where Geoffry Chaucer was fined two shillings for beating a Franciscan Friar in Fleet Street." *Chaucer's Life by T. Speght, prefixed to the black letter folio of Chaucer*, 1598.

Yours in haste (salt fish waiting), C. LAMB.

NOTE

[Haydon's picture was his "Alexander and Bucephalus." The two Bucks, he tells us in his *Diary*, were the Duke of Devonshire and Mr. Agar Ellis.

Haydon did not take up the Chaucer subject.]

LETTER 391

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM HONE

[No date. April, 1827.]

DEAR H. Never come to our house and not come in. I was quite vex'd.

Yours truly.
C. L.

There is in Blackwood this month an article MOST AFFECTING indeed called Le Revenant, and would do more towards abolishing Capital Punishments than 400000 Romillies or Montagues. I beg you read it and see if you can extract any of it. *The Trial scene in particular.*

NOTE

[Written on the fourteenth instalment of the Garrick Play extracts. Now preserved at Rowfant. The article was in *Blackwood* for April, 1827. Hone took Lamb's advice, and the extract from it will be found in the *Table Book*, Vol. I., col. 455.

Lamb was peculiarly interested in the subject of survival after hanging. He wrote an early *Reflector* essay, "On the Inconveniences of Being Hanged," on the subject, and it is the pivot of his farce "The Pawnbroker's Daughter."

"Romillies or Montagues." Two prominent advocates for the abolition of capital punishment were Sir Samuel Romilly (who died in 1818) and Basil Montagu.]

LETTER 392

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS HOOD

[No date. May, 1827.]

DEAREST Hood,—Your news has spoil'd us a merry meeting. Miss Kelly and we were coming, but your letter elicited a flood of tears from Mary, and I saw she was not fit for a party. God bless you and the mother (or should be mother) of your sweet girl that should have been. I have won sexpence of Moxon by the *sex* of the dear gone one.

Yours most truly and hers,
[C. L.]

NOTE

[This note refers to one of the Hoods' children, which was still-born. It was upon this occasion that Lamb wrote the beautiful lines "On an Infant Dying as soon as Born" (see Vol. V., pages 49 and 307).]

LETTER 393

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[No date. (1827.)]

MY dear B. B.—A gentleman I never saw before brought me your welcome present—imagine a scraping, fiddling, fidgetting, petit-maitre of a dancing school advancing into my plain parlour with a coupee and a sideling bow, and presenting the book as if he had been handing a glass of lemonade to a young miss—imagine this, and contrast it with the serious nature of the book presented! Then task your imagination, reversing this picture, to conceive of quite an opposite messenger, a lean, straitlocked, whey-faced methodist, for such was he in reality who brought it, the Genius (it seems) of the Wesleyan Magazine. Certes, friend B., thy Widow's tale is too horrible, spite of the lenitives of Religion, to embody in verse: I hold prose to be the appropriate expositor of such atrocities! No offence, but it is a cordial that makes the heart sick. Still thy skill in compounding it I not deny. I turn to what gave me less mingled pleasure. I find markd with pencil these pages in thy pretty book, and fear I have been penurious.

page 52, 53 capital.
" 59 6th stanza exquisite simile.
" 61 11th stanza equally good.
" 108 3d stanza, I long to see van Balen.
" 111 a downright good sonnet. *Dixi.*
" 153 Lines at the bottom.

So you see, I read, hear, and *mark*, if I don't learn—In short this little volume is no discredit to any of your former, and betrays none of the Senility you fear about. Apropos of Van Balen, an artist who painted me lately had painted a Blackamoor praying, and not filling his canvas, stuff'd in his little girl aside of Blacky, gaping at him unmeaningly; and then didn't know what to call it. Now for a picture to be promoted to the Exhibition (Suffolk Street) as HISTORICAL, a subject is requisite. What does me? I but christen it the "Young Catechist" and furbishd it with Dialogue following, which dubb'd it an Historical Painting. Nothing to a friend at need.

While this tawny Ethiop prayeth,
Painter, who is She that stayeth
By, with skin of whitest lustre;
Sunny locks, a shining cluster;
Saintlike seeming to direct him
To the Power that must protect him?
Is she of the heav'nborn Three,
Meek Hope, strong Faith, sweet Charity?
Or some Cherub?
They you mention
Far transcend my weak invention.
'Tis a simple Christian child,
Missionary young and mild,
From her store of script'ral knowledge
(Bible-taught without a college)
Which by reading she could gather,
Teaches him to say OUR FATHER
To the common Parent, who
Colour not respects nor hue.
White and Black in him have part,
Who looks not to the skin, but heart.—

When I'd done it, the Artist (who had clapt in Miss merely as a fill-space) swore I exprest his full meaning, and the damosel bridled up into a Missionary's vanity. I like verses to explain Pictures: seldom Pictures to illustrate Poems. Your wood cut is a rueful Lignum Mortis. By the by, is the widow likely to marry again?

I am giving the fruit of my Old Play reading at the Museum to Hone, who sets forth a Portion weekly in the Table Book. Do you see it? How is Mitford?—

I'll just hint that the Pitcher, the Chord and the Bowl are a little too often repeated (*passim*) in your Book, and that on page 17 last line but 4 *him* is put for *he*, but the poor widow I take it had

small leisure for grammatical niceties. Don't you see there's *He, myself*, and *him;* why not both *him?* likewise *imperviously* is cruelly spelt *imperiously*. These are trifles, and I honestly like your [book,] and you for giving it, tho' I really am ashamed of so many presents.

I can think of no news, therefore I will end with mine and Mary's kindest remembrances to you and yours. C. L.

NOTE

[It has been customary to date this letter December, 1827, but I think that must be too late. Lamb would never have waited till then to tell Barton that he was contributing the Garrick Plays to Hone's *Table Book*, especially as the last instalment was printed in that month.

Barton's new volume was *A Widow's Tale and Other Poems*, 1827. The title poem tells how a missionary and his wife were wrecked, and how after three nights and days of horror she was saved. The woodcut on the title-page of Barton's book represented the widow supporting her dead or dying husband in the midst of the storm.

This is the "exquisite simile" on page 59, from "A Grandsire's Tale":—

Though some might deem her pensive, if not sad,
  Yet those who knew her better, best could tell
How calmly happy, and how meekly glad
  Her quiet heart in its own depths did dwell:
Like to the waters of some crystal well,
  In which the stars of heaven at noon are seen,
Fancy might deem on her young spirit fell
  Glimpses of light more glorious and serene
Than that of life's brief day, so heavenly was her mien.

This was the "downright good sonnet":—

TO A GRANDMOTHER

"Old age is dark and unlovely."—Ossian.

O say not so! A bright old age is thine;
  Calm as the gentle light of summer eves,
  Ere twilight dim her dusky mantle weaves;
Because to thee is given, in strength's decline,
A heart that does not thanklessly repine
  At aught of which the hand of God bereaves,
  Yet all He sends with gratitude receives;—
May such a quiet, thankful close be mine.
And hence thy fire-side chair appears to me
  A peaceful throne—which thou wert form'd to fill;
  Thy children—ministers, who do thy will;
And those grand-children, sporting round thy knee,
Thy little subjects, looking up to thee,
  As one who claims their fond allegiance still.

THE YOUNG CATECHIST

PAINTED AND ENGRAVED BY HENRY MEYER

And these are the lines at the foot of page 153 in a poem addressed to a child seven years old :—

> There is a holy, blest companionship
> In the sweet intercourse thus held with those
> Whose tear and smile are guileless; from whose lip
> The simple dictate of the heart yet flows ;—
> Though even in the yet unfolded rose
> The worm may lurk, and sin blight blooming youth,
> The light born with us long so brightly glows,
> That childhood's first deceits seem almost truth,
> To life's cold after lie, selfish, and void of ruth.

Van Balen was the painter of the picture of the "Madonna and Child" which Mrs. FitzGerald (Edward FitzGerald's mother) had given to Barton and for which he expressed his thanks in a poem.

The artist who painted Lamb recently was Henry Meyer (1782?-1847), the portrait being that which serves as frontispiece to Vol. VI. of this edition. See opposite page 728 for a reproduction of "The Young Catechist," which Meyer also engraved, with Lamb's verses attached.]

LETTERS 394 AND 395

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM HONE

[No date. End of May, 1827.]

DEAR H. in the forthcoming "New Monthly" are to be verses of mine on a Picture about Angels. Translate em to the Table-book. I am off for Enfield.

Yours, C. L.

NOTE

[Written on the back of the XXI. Garrick Extracts. The poem "Angel Help" was printed in the *New Monthly Magazine* for June and copied by Hone in the *Table-Book*, No. 24, 1827.]

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM HONE

[No date. June, 1827.]

DEAR Hone, I should like this in your next book. We are at Enfield, where (when we have solituded awhile) we shall be glad to see you.

Yours,

C. LAMB.

NOTE

[This was written on the back of the MS. of "Going or Gone" (see Vol. V., page 70), a poem of reminiscences of Lamb's early Widford days, printed in Hone's *Table-Book*, June, 1827, signed Elia.]

LETTER 396

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

Enfield, and for some weeks to come,
"*June 11, 1827.*"

DEAR B. B.—One word more of the picture verses, and that for good and all; pray, with a neat pen alter one line

His learning seems to lay small stress on

to

His learning lays no mighty stress on

to avoid the unseemly recurrence (ungrammatical also) of "seems" in the next line, besides the nonsence of "but" there, as it now stands. And I request you, as a personal favor to me, to erase the last line of all, which I should never have written from myself. The fact is, it was a silly joke of Hood's, who gave me the frame, (you judg'd rightly it was not its own) with the remark that you would like it, because it was b—d b—d,—and I lugg'd it in: but I shall be quite hurt if it stands, because tho' you and yours have too good sense to object to it, I would not have a sentence of mine seen, that to any foolish ear might sound unrespectful to thee. Let it end at appalling; the joke is coarse and useless, and hurts the tone of the rest. Take your best "ivory-handled" and scrape it forth.

Your specimen of what you might have written is hardly fair. Had it been a present to me, I should have taken a more sentimental tone; but of a trifle from me it was my cue to speak in an underish tone of commendation. Prudent *givers* (what a word for such a nothing) disparage their gifts; 'tis an art we have. So you see you wouldnt have been so wrong, taking a higher tone. But enough of nothing.

By the bye, I suspected M. of being the disparager of the frame; hence a *certain line*.

For the frame, 'tis as the room is, where it hangs. It hung up fronting my old cobwebby folios and batter'd furniture (the fruit piece has resum'd its place) and was much better than a spick and

THE PICTURE LENT BY LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

FROM THE ORIGINAL IN THE POSSESSION OF MRS. EDMUND LYONS

span one. But if your room be very neat and your *other pictures* bright with gilt, it should be so too. I can't judge, not having seen : but my dingy study it suited.

Martin's Belshazzar (the picture) I have seen. Its architectural effect is stupendous ; but the human figures, the squalling contorted little antics that are playing at being frightend, like children at a sham ghost who half know it to be a mask, are detestable. Then the *letters* are nothing more than a transparency lighted up, such as a Lord might order to be lit up on a sudden at a Xmas Gambol, to scare the ladies. The *type* is as plain as Baskervil's—they should have been dim, full of mystery, letters to the mind rather than the eye.—Rembrandt has painted only Belshazzar and a courtier or two (taking a part of the banquet for the whole) not fribbled out a mob of fine folks. Then every thing is so distinct, to the very necklaces, and that foolish little prophet. What *one* point is there of interest ? The ideal of such a subject is, that you the spectator should see nothing but what at the time you would have seen, the *hand*—and the *King*—not to be at leisure to make taylor-remarks on the dresses, or Doctor Kitchener-like to examine the good things at table.

Just such a confusd piece is his Joshua, fritterd into 1000 fragments, little armies here, little armies there—you should see only the *Sun* and *Joshua ;* if I remember, he has not left out that luminary entirely, but for Joshua, I was ten minutes a finding him out.

Still he is showy in all that is not the human figure or the preternatural interest : but the first are below a drawing school girl's attainment, and the last is a phantasmagoric trick, "Now you shall see what you shall see, dare is Balshazar and dare is Daniel." You have my thoughts of M. and so adieu C. Lamb.

Note

[Lamb had sent Barton the picture (now in the possession of Mrs. Edmund Lyons) that is reproduced in Vol. V. of this edition, and again here. Later Lamb had sent the following lines :—

When last you left your Woodbridge pretty,
To stare at sights, and see the City,
If I your meaning understood,
You wish'd a Picture, cheap, but good ;
The colouring ? decent ; clear, not muddy ;
To suit a Poet's quiet study,
Where Books and Prints for delectation
Hang, rather than vain ostentation.
The subject ? what I pleased, if comely ;
But something scriptural and homely :
A sober Piece, not gay or wanton,
For winter fire-sides to descant on ;

The theme so scrupulously handled,
A Quaker might look on unscandal'd;
Such as might satisfy Ann Knight,
And classic Mitford just not fright.
Just such a one I've found, and send it;
If liked, I give—if not, but lend it.
The moral? nothing can be sounder.
The fable? 'tis its own expounder—
A Mother teaching to her Chit
Some good book, and explaining it.
He, silly urchin, tired of lesson,
His learning seems to lay small stress on,
But seems to hear not what he hears;
Thrusting his fingers in his ears,
Like Obstinate, that perverse funny one,
In honest parable of Bunyan.
His working Sister, more sedate,
Listens; but in a kind of state,
The painter meant for steadiness;
But has a tinge of sullenness;
And, at first sight, she seems to brook
As ill her needle, as he his book.
This is the Picture. For the Frame—
'Tis not ill-suited to the same;
Oak-carved, not gilt, for fear of falling;
Old-fashion'd; plain, yet not appalling;
And broad brimm'd, as the Owner's Calling.

It was not Obstinate, by the way, who thrust his fingers in his ears, but Christian.

"Hence a *certain line*"—line 16, I suppose.

Martin's "Belshazzar." "Belshazzar's Feast," by John Martin (1789-1854), reproduced opposite page 450 of Vol. II., had been exhibited for some years and had created an immense impression. Lamb subjected Martin's work to a minute analysis a few years later (see the *Elia* essay on the "Barrenness of the Imaginative Faculty in the Productions of Modern Art," Vol. II., page 226). Martin's "Joshua Commanding the Sun to Stand Still" is there reproduced also, opposite page 452. Barton did not give up Martin in consequence of this letter. The frontispiece to his *New Year's Eve*, 1828, is by that painter, and the volume contains eulogistic poems upon him, one beginning—

Boldest painter of our day.

"Baskervil's"—John Baskerville (1706-1775), the printer, famous for his folio edition of the Bible, 1763.

Doctor William Kitchiner—the author of *Apicius Redivivus; or, The Cook's Oracle*, 1817.]

LETTER 397

CHARLES LAMB TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

[P.M. June 26, 1827.]

DEAR H. C. We are at Mrs. Leishman's, Chase, Enfield. Why not come down by the Green Lanes on Sunday? Picquet all day. Pass the Church, pass the "Rising Sun," turn sharp round the corner, and we are the 6th or 7th house on the Chase: tall Elms darken the door. If you set eyes on M. Burney, bring him.

Yours truly C. LAMB.

NOTE

[Mrs. Leishman's house, or its successor, is the seventh from the Rising Sun. It is now on Gentleman's Row, not on Chase Side proper. The house next it—still, as in Lamb's day, a girl's school—is called Elm House, but most of the elms which darkened both doors have vanished. It has been surmised that when later in the year Lamb took an Enfield house in his own name, he took Mrs. Leishman's; but, as we shall see, his own house was some little distance from hers.]

LETTER 398

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM HONE

[No date. Early July, 1827.]

DEAR H., This is Hood's, done from the life, of Mary getting over a style here. Mary, out of a pleasant revenge, wants you to get it *engrav'd* in Table Book to surprise H., who I know will be amus'd with you so doing.

Append some observations about the awkwardness of country styles about Edmonton, and the difficulty of elderly Ladies getting over 'em.——

That is to say, if you think the sketch good enough.

I take on myself the warranty.

Can you slip down here some day and go a Green-dragoning?

C. L.

Enfield (Mrs. Leishman's, Chase).

If you do, send Hood the number, No. 2 Robert St., Adelphi, and keep the sketch for me.

NOTE

["This" was a drawing by Hood, reproduced on page 314 of Vol. I. of this edition, where it represents Mrs. Gilpin resting near Edmonton. I repeat the drawing here from the *Table-Book*:—

Lamb subsequently appended the observations himself. The text of his little article, changing Mary Lamb into Mrs. Gilpin, follows in Mr. Locker-Lampson's album. The postmark is July 17, 1827.]

LETTER 399

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

Enfield. P.M. July 17, 182[7].

DEAR M. Thanks for your attentions of every kind. Emma will not fail Mrs. Hood's kind invitation, but her Aunt is so queer a one, that we cannot let her go with a single gentleman singly to Vauxhall; she would withdraw her from us altogether in a fright; but if any of the Hood's family accompany you, then there can be small objection.

I have been writing letters till too dark to see the marks. I can just say we shall be happy to see you any Sunday *after the next:* say, the Sunday after, and perhaps the Hoods will come too and have a merry other day, before they go hence. But next Sunday we expect as many as we can well entertain.

With ours and Emma's
acknowlgm^s^
yours
C. L.

NOTE

[The earliest of a long series of letters to Edward Moxon, now preserved at Rowfant by Mr. Godfrey Locker-Lampson. Emma Isola's aunt was Miss Humphreys (see Letter 253).]

LETTER 400

CHARLES LAMB TO P. G. PATMORE

[Dated at end: July 19, 1827.]

DEAR P.—I am so poorly! I have been to a funeral, where I made a pun, to the consternation of the rest of the mourners. And we had wine. I can't describe to you the howl which the widow set up at proper intervals. Dash could, for it was not unlike what he makes.

The letter I sent you was one directed to the care of E. White, India House, for Mrs. Hazlitt. *Which* Mrs. Hazlitt I don't yet know, but A. has taken it to France on speculation. Really it is embarrassing. There is Mrs. present H., Mrs. late H., and Mrs. John H., and to which of the three Mrs. Wiggins's it appertains, I don't know. I wanted to open it, but it's transportation.

I am sorry you are plagued about your book. I would strongly recommend you to take for one story Massinger's "Old Law." It is exquisite. I can think of no other.

Dash is frightful this morning. He whines and stands up on his hind legs. He misses Beckey, who is gone to town. I took him to Barnet the other day, and he couldn't eat his victuals after it. Pray God his intellectuals be not slipping.

Mary is gone out for some soles. I suppose 'tis no use to ask you to come and partake of 'em; else there's a steam-vessel.

I am doing a tragi-comedy in two acts, and have got on tolerably; but it will be refused, or worse. I never had luck with anything my name was put to.

Oh, I am so poorly! I *waked* it at my cousin's the bookbinder's, who is now with God; or, if he is not, it's no fault of mine.

We hope the Frank wines do not disagree with Mrs. Patmore. By the way, I like her.

Did you ever taste frogs? Get them, if you can. They are like little Lilliput rabbits, only a thought nicer.

Christ, how sick I am!—not of the world, but of the widow's shrub. She's sworn under £6000, but I think she perjured herself. She howls in E *la*, and I comfort her in B flat. You understand music? . . .

"No shrimps!" (That's in answer to Mary's question about how the soles are to be done.)

I am uncertain where this *wandering* letter may reach you. What you mean by Poste Restante, God knows. Do you mean I must pay the postage? So I do to Dover.

We had a merry passage with the widow at the Commons. She was howling—part howling and part giving directions to the proctor—when crash! down went my sister through a crazy chair, and made the clerks grin, and I grinned, and the widow tittered—*and then I knew that she was not inconsolable.* Mary was more frightened than hurt.

She'd make a good match for anybody (by she, I mean the widow).

> "If he bring but a *relict* away,
> He is happy, nor heard to complain."
>
> SHENSTONE.

Procter has got a wen growing out at the nape of his neck, which his wife wants him to have cut off; but I think it rather an agreeable excrescence—like his poetry—redundant. Hone has hanged himself for debt. Godwin was taken up for picking pockets. . . . Beckey takes to bad courses. Her father was blown up in a steam machine. The coroner found it Insanity. I should not like him to sit on my letter.

Do you observe my direction? Is it Gallic?—Classical?

Do try and get some frogs. You must ask for "grenouilles" (green-eels). They don't understand "frogs," though it's a common phrase with us.

If you go through Bulloign (Boulogne) enquire if old Godfrey is living, and how he got home from the Crusades. He must be a very old man now.

If there is anything new in politics or literature in France, keep it till I see you again, for I'm in no hurry. Chatty-Briant is well I hope.

I think I have no more news; only give both our loves ("all

three," says Dash) to Mrs. Patmore, and bid her get quite well, as I am at present, bating qualms, and the grief incident to losing a valuable relation. C. L.

Londres, July 19, 1827.

NOTE

[This is from Patmore's *My Friends and Acquaintances*, 1854; but I have no confidence in Patmore's transcription. After "picking pockets" should come, for example, according to other editors, the sentence, "Moxon has fallen in love with Emma, our nut-brown maid." This is the first we hear of the circumstance and quite probably Lamb was then exaggerating. As it happened, however, Moxon and Miss Isola, as we shall see, were married in 1833.

We do not know the name of the widow; but her husband was Lamb's cousin, the bookbinder.

The doubt about the Hazlitts refers chiefly to William Hazlitt's divorce from his first wife in 1822, and his remarriage in 1824 with a Mrs. Bridgewater.

"Your book." Patmore, in *My Friends and Acquaintances*, writes:—

This refers to a series of tales that I was writing, (since published under the title of *Chatsworth, or the Romance of a Week*,) for the subject of one of which he had recommended me to take "The Old Law." As Lamb's critical faculties (as displayed in the celebrated "specimens" which created an era in the dramatic taste of England) were not surpassed by those of any writer of his day, the reader may like to see a few "specimens" of some notes which Lamb took the pains to make on two of the tales that were shown to him. I give these the rather that there is occasionally blended with their critical nicety of tact, a drollery that is very characteristic of the writer. I shall leave these notes and verbal criticisms to speak for themselves, after merely explaining that they are written on separate bits of paper, each note having a numerical reference to that page of the MS. in which occurs the passage commented on.

"Besides the words 'riant' and 'Euphrosyne,' the sentence is senseless. 'A sweet sadness' capable of inspiring 'a more *grave joy*'—than what?—than demonstrations of *mirth?* Odd if it had not been. I had once a *wry aunt*, which may make me dislike the phrase.

"'Pleasurable:'—no word is good that is awkward to spell. (Query.) Welcome or Joyous.

"'*Steady self-possession* rather than *undaunted courage*,' etc. The two things are not opposed enough. You mean, rather than rash fire of valour in action.

"'Looking like a heifer,' I fear wont do in prose. (Qy.) 'Like to some spotless heifer,'—or, 'that you might have compared her to some spotless heifer,' etc.—or 'Like to some sacrificial heifer of old.' I should prefer, 'garlanded with flowers as for a sacrifice'—and cut the cow altogether.

"(Say) 'Like the muttering of some strange spell,'—omitting the demon,—they are *subject* to spells, they don't use them.

"'Feud' here (and before and after) is wrong. (Say) old malice, or, difference. *Feud* is of clans. It might be applied to family quarrels, but is quite improper to individuals falling out.

"'Apathetic.' Vile word.

"'Mechanically,' faugh!—insensibly—involuntarily—in-anything-ly but mechanically.

"Calianax's character should be somewhere briefly *drawn*, not left to be dramatically inferred.

"'Surprised and almost vexed while it troubled her.' (Awkward.) Better, 'in a way that while it deeply troubled her, could not but surprise and vex her to think it should be a source of trouble at all.'

"'Reaction' is vile slang. 'Physical'—vile word.

"Decidedly, Dorigen should simply propose to him to remove the rocks as *ugly* or *dangerous*, not as affecting her with fears for her husband. The idea of her husband should be excluded from a promise which is meant to be *frank* upon impossible conditions. She cannot promise in one breath infidelity to him, and make the conditions a good to him. Her reason for hating the rocks is good, but not to be expressed here.

"Insert after 'to whatever consequences it might lead,'—'Neither had Arviragus been disposed to interpose a husband's authority to prevent the execution of this rash vow, was he unmindful of that older and more solemn vow which, in the days of their marriage, he had imposed upon himself, in no instance to control the settled purpose or determination of his wedded wife;—so that by the chains of a double contract he seemed bound to abide by her decision in this instance, whatever it might be.'"

"A tragi-comedy"—Lamb's dramatic version of Crabbe's "Confidante," which he called "The Wife's Trial" (see Vol. V. of this edition).

"If he bring but a *relict* away . . ." From Shenstone's "Absence":—

> If he bear but a relique away
> Is happy, nor heard to repine.

"Procter has got a wen." This paragraph must be taken with salt. Poor Hone, however, had the rules of the King's Bench at the time. Beckey was the Lambs' servant and tyrant; she had been Hazlitt's. Patmore described her at some length in his reminiscences of Lamb.

"Chatty-Briant"—Chateaubriand.]

LETTER 401

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Enfield, July 26th, 1827.

DEAR Mrs. Shelley,—At the risk of throwing away some fine thoughts, I must write to say how pleased we were with your very kind remembering of us (who have unkindly run away from all our friends) before you go. Perhaps you are gone, and then my tropes are wasted. If any piece of better fortune has lighted upon you than you expected, but less than we wish you, we are rejoiced. We are here trying to like solitude, but have scarce enough to justify

the experiment. We get some, however. The six days are our Sabbath; the seventh—why, Cockneys will come for a little fresh air, and so—

But by *your month*, or October at furthest, we hope to see Islington: I like a giant refreshed with the leaving off of wine, and Mary, pining for Mr. Moxon's books and Mr. Moxon's society. Then we shall meet.

I am busy with a farce in two acts, the incidents tragi-comic. I can do the dialogue *commey for:* but the damned plot—I believe I must omit it altogether. The scenes come after one another like geese, not marshalling like cranes or a Hyde Park review. The story is as simple as G[eorge] D[yer], and the language plain as his spouse. The characters are three women to one man; which is one more than laid hold on him in the "Evangely." I think that prophecy squinted towards my drama.

I want some Howard Paine to sketch a skeleton of artfully succeeding scenes through a whole play, as the courses are arranged in a cookery book: I to find wit, passion, sentiment, character, and the like trifles: to lay in the dead colours,—I'd Titianesque 'em up: to mark the channel in a cheek (smooth or furrowed, yours or mine), and where tears should course I'd draw the waters down: to say where a joke should come in or a pun be left out: to bring my *personæ* on and off like a Beau Nash; and I'd Frankenstein them there: to bring three together on the stage at once; they are so shy with me, that I can get no more than two; and there they stand till it is the time, without being the season, to withdraw them.

I am teaching Emma Latin to qualify her for a superior governesship; which we see no prospect of her getting. 'Tis like feeding a child with chopped hay from a spoon. Sisyphus—his labours were as nothing to it.

Actives and passives jostle in her nonsense, till a deponent enters, like Chaos, more to embroil the fray. Her prepositions are suppositions; her conjunctions copulative have no connection in them; her concords disagree; her interjections are purely English "Ah!" and "Oh!" with a yawn and a gape in the same tongue; and she herself is a lazy, block-headly supine. As I say to her, ass *in præsenti* rarely makes a wise man *in futuro*.

But I daresay it was so with you when you began Latin, and a good while after.

Good-by! Mary's love.

Yours truly, C. Lamb.

Note

[This is the only letter to Mrs. Shelley, *née* Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, the widow of the poet and the author of *Frankenstein*.

She had been living in England since 1823; and in 1826 had issued anonymously *The Last Man.* That she kept much in touch with the Lambs' affairs we know by her letters to Leigh Hunt.

"A farce"—"The Wife's Trial," Lamb's blank-verse treatment of Crabbe's "Confidante" (see Vol. V., page 243). *Commey for* is Lamb's *comme il faut.*

"In the 'Evangely.'" If by Evangely he meant Gospel, Lamb was a little confused here, I think. Probably Isaiah iv. 1 was in his mind: "and in that day seven women shall take hold of one man." But he may also have half remembered Luke xvii. 35.

"Howard Paine." See note on page 576.

"I am teaching Emma Latin." Mary Lamb contributed to *Blackwood's Magazine* for June, 1829, the following little poem describing Emma Isola's difficulties in these lessons:—

TO EMMA, LEARNING LATIN, AND DESPONDING

Droop not, dear Emma, dry those falling tears,
And call up smiles into thy pallid face,
Pallid and care-worn with thy arduous race:
In few brief months thou hast done the work of years.
To young beginnings natural are these fears.
A right good scholar shalt thou one day be,
And that no distant one; when even she,
Who now to thee a star far off appears,
That most rare Latinist, the Northern Maid—
The language-loving Sarah[1] of the Lake—
Shall hail thee Sister Linguist. This will make
Thy friends, who now afford thee careful aid,
A recompense most rich for all their pains,
Counting thy acquisitions their best gains.

"Ass *in præsenti.*" This was Boyer's joke, at Christ's Hospital (see Vol. I. of this edition, page 305).

Here should come a letter from Lamb to Edward White, of the India House, dated August 1, 1827, not available for this edition (printed by Mr. Hazlitt), in which Lamb has some pleasantry about paying postages, and ends by heartily commending White to mind his ledger, and keep his eye on Mr. Chambers' balances.

See Appendix II., page 975, for another letter at this time.]

LETTER 402

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. BASIL MONTAGU

[Summer, 1827.]

DEAR Madam,—I return your List with my name. I should be sorry that any respect should be going on towards [Clarkson,] and I be left out of the conspiracy. Otherwise I frankly own that

[1] Daughter of S. T. Coleridge, Esq.; an accomplished linguist in the Greek and Latin tongues, and translatress of a History of the Abipones.

to pillarize a man's good feelings in his lifetime is not to my taste. Monuments to goodness, even after death, are equivocal. I turn away from Howard's, I scarce know why. Goodness blows no trumpet, nor desires to have it blown. We should be modest for a modest man—as he is for himself. The vanities of Life—Art, Poetry, Skill military, are subjects for trophies; not the silent thoughts arising in a good man's mind in lonely places. Was I C[larkson,] I should never be able to walk or ride near —— again. Instead of bread, we are giving him a stone. Instead of the locality recalling the noblest moment of his existence, it is a place at which his friends (that is, himself) blow to the world, "What a good man is he!" I sat down upon a hillock at Forty Hill yesternight—a fine contemplative evening,—with a thousand good speculations about mankind. How I yearned with cheap benevolence! I shall go and inquire of the stone-cutter, that cuts the tombstones here, what a stone with a short inscription will cost; just to say—"Here C. Lamb loved his brethren of mankind." Everybody will come there to love. As I can't well put my own name, I shall put about a subscription:

	s.	d.	
Mrs. —— . .	5	0	
Procter . .	2	6	
G. Dyer . .	1	0	
Mr. Godwin .	0	0	
Mrs. Godwin .	0	0	
Mr. Irving . .			a watch-chain.
Mr. —— . .			the proceeds of —— first edition.*
	8	6	

I scribble in haste from here, where we shall be some time. Pray request Mr. M[ontagu] to advance the guinea for me, which shall faithfully be forthcoming; and pardon me that I don't see the proposal in quite the light that he may. The kindness of his motives, and his power of appreciating the noble passage, I thoroughly agree in.

With most kind regards to him, I conclude,

Dear Madam,

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

From Mrs. Leishman's,
Chase, Enfield.

* A capital book, by the bye, but not over saleable.

NOTE

[The memorial to Thomas Clarkson stands on a hill above Wade Mill, on the Buntingford Road, in Hertfordshire.

Forty Hill is close to Enfield.

Edward Irving's watch-chain. The explanation of Lamb's joke is to be found in Carlyle's *Reminiscences* (quoted also in Froude's *Life*, Vol. I., page 326). Irving had put down as his contribution to some subscription list, at a public meeting, "an actual gold watch, which he said had just arrived to him from his beloved brother lately dead in India." This rather theatrical action had evidently amused Lamb as it had disgusted Carlyle.

The "first edition" of "Mr. ——" was, I suppose, Basil Montagu's work on Bacon, which Macaulay reviewed.]

LETTER 403

MARY LAMB TO LADY STODDART

[August 9, 1827.]

MY dear Lady-Friend,—My brother called at our empty cottage yesterday, and found the cards of your son and his friend, Mr. Hine, under the door; which has brought to my mind that I am in danger of losing this post, as I did the last, being at that time in a confused state of mind—for at that time we were talking of leaving, and persuading ourselves that we were intending to leave town and all our friends, and sit down for ever, solitary and forgotten, here. Here we are; and we have locked up our house, and left it to take care of itself; but at present we do not design to extend our rural life beyond Michaelmas. Your kind letter was most welcome to me, though the good news contained in it was already known to me. Accept my warmest congratulations, though they come a little of the latest. In my next I may probably have to hail you Grandmama; or to felicitate you on the nuptials of pretty Mary, who, whatever the beaux of Malta may think of her, I can only remember her round shining face, and her "O William!"—"dear William!" when we visited her the other day at school. Present my love and best wishes—a long and happy married life to dear Isabella—I love to call her Isabella; but in truth, having left your other letter in town, I recollect no other name she has.

The same love and the same wishes—in futuro—to my friend Mary. Tell her that her "dear William" grows taller, and improves in manly looks and manlike behaviour every time I see him. What is Henry about? and what should one wish for him? If he be in search of a wife, I will send him out Emma Isola.

You remember Emma, that you were so kind as to invite to your ball? She is now with us; and I am moving heaven and earth,

that is to say, I am pressing the matter upon all the very few friends I have that are likely to assist me in such a case, to get her into a family as a governess; and Charles and I do little else here than teach her something or other all day long.

We are striving to put enough Latin into her to enable her to begin to teach it to young learners. So much for Emma—for you are so fearfully far away, that I fear it is useless to implore your patronage for her.

I have not heard from Mrs. Hazlitt a long time. I believe she is still with Hazlitt's mother in Devonshire.

I expect a pacquet of manuscript from you: you promised me the office of negotiating with booksellers, and so forth, for your next work. Is it in good forwardness? or do you grow rich and indolent now? It is not surprising that your Maltese story should find its way into Malta; but I was highly pleased with the idea of your pleasant surprise at the sight of it. I took a large sheet of paper, in order to leave Charles room to add something more worth reading than my poor mite.

May we all meet again once more!

M. Lamb.

LETTER 403 (*continued*)

CHARLES LAMB TO SIR JOHN STODDART

DEAR Knight—Old Acquaintance—'Tis with a violence to the *pure imagination* (*vide* the "Excursion" *passim*) that I can bring myself to believe I am writing to Dr. Stoddart once again, at Malta. But the deductions of severe reason warrant the proceeding. I write from Enfield, where we are seriously weighing the advantages of dulness over the over-excitement of too much company, but have not yet come to a conclusion. What is the news? for we see no paper here; perhaps you can send us an old one from Malta. Only, I heard a butcher in the market-place whisper something about a change of ministry. I don't know who's in or out, or care, only as it might affect *you*. For domestic doings, I have only to tell, with extreme regret, that poor Elisa Fenwick (that was)—Mrs. Rutherford—is dead; and that we have received a most heart-broken letter from her mother—left with four grandchildren, orphans of a living scoundrel lurking about the pothouses of Little Russell Street, London: they and she—God help 'em!—at New York. I have just received Godwin's third volume of the *Republic*, which only reaches to the commencement of the Protectorate. I think he

means to spin it out to his life's thread. Have you seen Fearn's *Anti-Tooke?* I am no judge of such things—you are; but I think it very clever indeed. If I knew your bookseller, I'd order it for you at a venture: 'tis two octavos, Longman and Co. Or do you read now? Tell it not in the Admiralty Court, but my head aches *hesterno vino.* I can scarce pump up words, much less ideas, congruous to be sent so far. But your son must have this by to-night's post. [*Here came a passage relating to an escapade of young Stoddart, then at the Charterhouse, which, probably through Lamb's intervention, was treated leniently. Lamb helped him with his imposition—Gray's "Elegy" into Greek elegiacs.*] Manning is gone to Rome, Naples, etc., probably to touch at Sicily, Malta, Guernsey, etc.; but I don't know the map. Hazlitt is resident at Paris, whence he pours his lampoons in safety at his friends in England. He has his boy with him. I am teaching Emma Latin. By the time you can answer this, she will be qualified to instruct young ladies: she is a capital English reader: and S. T. C. acknowledges that a part of a passage in Milton she read better than he, and part he read best, her part being the shorter. But, seriously, if Lady St—— (oblivious pen, that was about to write *Mrs.!*) could hear of such a young person wanted (she smatters of French, some Italian, music of course), we'd send our loves by her. My congratulations and assurances of old esteem. C. L.

NOTE

[Stoddart had been appointed in 1826 Chief-Justice and Justice of the Vice-Admiralty Court in Malta and had been knighted in the same year. His daughter Isabella had just married. Lady Stoddart's literary efforts did not, I think, reach print.

"The deductions of severe reason." See the quotation from Cottle on page 257.

"A change of ministry." On Liverpool's resignation early in 1827 Canning had been called in to form a new Ministry, which he effected by an alliance with the Whigs.

"Godwin's *Republic*"—*History of the Commonwealth of England*, in four volumes, 1824-1828.

"Fearn's *Anti-Tooke*"—*Anti-Tooke; or, An Analysis of the Principles and Structure of Language Exemplified in the English Tongue*, 1824.

"*Hesterno vino*"—"with yesterday's wine."

Here should come a note from Lamb to Hone, dated August 10, 1827, in which Lamb expresses regret for Matilda Hone's illness.]

LETTER 404

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. 10 August, 1827.]

DEAR B. B.—I have not been able to answer you, for we have had, and are having (I just snatch a moment), our poor quiet retreat, to which we fled from society, full of company, some staying with us, and this moment as I write almost a heavy importation of two old Ladies has come in. Whither can I take wing from the oppression of human faces? Would I were in a wilderness of Apes, tossing cocoa nuts about, grinning and grinned at!

Mitford was hoaxing you surely about my Engraving, 'tis a little sixpenny thing, too like by half, in which the draughtsman has done his best to avoid flattery. There have been 2 editions of it, which I think are all gone, as they have vanish'd from the window where they hung, a print shop, corner of Great and Little Queen Streets, Lincolns Inn fields, where any London friend of yours may inquire for it; for I am (tho' you *won't understand* it) at Enfield (Mrs. Leishman's, Chase). We have been here near 3 months, and shall stay 2 or more, if people will let us alone, but they persecute us from village to village. So don't direct to *Islington* again, till further notice.

I am trying my hand at a Drama, in 2 acts, founded on Crabbe's "Confidant," mutatis mutandis.

You like the Odyssey. Did you ever read my "Adventures of Ulysses," founded on Chapman's old translation of it? for children or *men*. Ch. is divine, and my abridgment has not quite emptied him of his divinity. When you come to town I'll show it you.

You have well described your old fashioned Grand-paternall Hall. Is it not odd that every one's earliest recollections are of some such place. I had my Blakesware (Blakesmoor in the "London"). Nothing fills a childs mind like a large old Mansion [*one or two words wafered over*]; better if un-or-partially-occupied; peopled with the spirits of deceased members of [for] the County and Justices of the Quorum. Would I were buried in the peopled solitude of one, with my feelings at 7 years old.

Those marble busts of the Emperors, they seem'd as if they were to stand for ever, as they had stood from the living days of Rome, in that old Marble Hall, and I to partake of their permanency; Eternity was, while I thought not of Time. But he thought of me, and they are toppled down, and corn covers the spot of the noble old Dwelling and its princely gardens. I feel like a grass-

hopper that chirping about the grounds escaped his scythe only by my littleness. Ev'n now he is whetting one of his smallest razors to clean wipe me out, perhaps. Well!

NOTE

["My Engraving"—Brook Pulham's caricature (see opposite page 706).

"You have well described your . . . Grand-paternall Hall." Barton wrote the following account of this house, the home of his step-grandfather at Tottenham; but I do not know whether it is the same that Lamb saw:—

My most delightful recollections of boyhood are connected with the fine old country-house in a green lane diverging from the high road which runs through Tottenham. I would give seven years of life as it now is, for a week of that which I then led. It was a large old house, with an iron palisade and a pair of iron gates in front, and a huge stone eagle on each pier. Leading up to the steps by which you went up to the hall door, was a wide gravel walk, bordered in summer time by huge tubs, in which were orange and lemon trees, and in the centre of the grass-plot stood a tub yet huger, holding an enormous aloe. The hall itself, to my fancy then lofty and wide as a cathedral would seem now, was a famous place for battledore and shuttlecock; and behind was a garden, equal to that of old Alcinous himself. My favourite walk was one of turf by a long straight pond, bordered with lime-trees. But the whole demesne was the fairy ground of my childhood; and its presiding genius was grandpapa. He must have been a very handsome man in his youth, for I remember him at nearly eighty, a very fine-looking one, even in the decay of mind and body. In the morning a velvet cap; by dinner, a flaxen wig; his features always expressive of benignity and placid cheerfulness. When he walked out into the garden, his cocked hat and amber-headed cane completed his costume. To the recollection of this delightful personage, I am, I think, indebted for many soothing and pleasing associations with old age.

"Those marble busts of the Emperors." See the *Elia* essay "Blakesmoor in H——shire," in Vol. II. of this edition, page 153.]

LETTER 405

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

28th of Aug., 1827.

I have left a place for a wafer, but can't find it again.

DEAR B. B.—I am thankful to you for your ready compliance with my wishes. Emma is delighted with your verses, to which I have appended this notice "The 6th line refers to the child of a dear friend of the author's, named Emma," without which it must be obscure; and have sent it with four Album poems of my own (your daughter's with *your* heading, requesting it a place next mine) to a Mr. Fraser, who is to be editor of a more superb Pocket

book than has yet appeared by far! the property of some wealthy booksellers, but whom, or what its name, I forgot to ask. It is actually to have in it schoolboy exercises by his present Majesty and the late Duke of York, so Lucy will come to Court; how she will be stared at! Wordsworth is named as a Contributor. Frazer, whom I have slightly seen, is Editor of a forth-come or coming Review of foreign books, and is intimately connected with Lockhart, &c. so I take it that this is a concern of Murray's. Walter Scott also contributes mainly. I have stood off a long time from these Annuals, which are ostentatious trumpery, but could not withstand the request of Jameson, a particular friend of mine and Coleridge.

I shall hate myself in frippery, strutting along, and vying finery with Beaux and Belles

with "Future Lord Byrons and sweet L. E. L.'s."—

Your taste I see is less simple than mine, which the difference of our persuasions has doubtless effected. In fact, of late you have so frenchify'd your style, larding it with hors de combats, and au desopoirs, that o' my conscience the Foxian blood is quite dried out of you, and the skipping Monsieur spirit has been infused. Doth Lucy go to Balls? I must remodel my lines, which I write for her. I hope A. K. keeps to her Primitives. If you have any thing you'd like to send further, I don't know Frazer's address, but I sent mine thro' Mr. Jameson, 19 or 90 Cheyne Street, Totnam Court road. I dare say an honourable place wou'd be given to them; but I have not heard from Frazer since I sent mine, nor shall probably again, and therefore I do not solicit it as from him.

Yesterday I sent off my tragi comedy to Mr. Kemble. Wish it luck. I made it all ('tis blank verse, and I think, of the true old dramatic cut) or most of it, in the green lanes about Enfield, where I am and mean to remain, in spite of your peremptory doubts on that head.

Your refusal to lend your poetical sanction to my Icon, and your reasons to Evans, are most sensible. May be I may hit on a line or two of my own jocular. May be not.

Do you never Londonize again? I should like to talk over old poetry with you, of which I have much, and you I think little. Do your Drummonds allow no holydays? I would willingly come and w[ork] for you a three weeks or so, to let you loose. Would I could sell or give you some of my Leisure! Positively, the best thing a man can have to do is nothing, and next to that perhaps—good works.

I am but poorlyish, and feel myself writing a dull letter; poorlyish from Company, not generally, for I never was better, nor took more walks, 14 miles a day on an average, with a sporting dog—Dash—you would not know the plain Poet, any more than he doth re-

cognize James Naylor trick'd out au deserpoy (how do you spell it.) En Passant, J'aime entendre da mon bon hommè sur surveillance de croix, ma pas l'homme figuratif—do you understand me?

NOTE

[The verses with which Emma was delighted were probably written for her album. I have not seen them. That album was cut up for the value of its autographs and exists now only in a mutilated state: where, I cannot discover. The pocket-book was *The Bijou*, 1828, edited by William Fraser for Pickering. Only one of Lamb's contributions was included: his verses for his own album (see Vol. V. of this edition; see the letter on page 47).

Jameson was Robert Jameson, to whom Hartley Coleridge addressed the sonnets in the *London Magazine* to which Lamb alludes in Letter 295. He was the husband of Mrs. Jameson, author of *Sacred and Legendary Art*, but the marriage was not happy. He lived in Chenies Street.

"Future Lord Byrons and sweet L. E. L.'s." A line from some verses written by Lamb in more than one album. Probably originally intended for Emma Isola's album. The passage runs, answering the question, "What is an Album?"—

> 'Tis a Book kept by modern Young Ladies for show,
> Of which their plain grandmothers nothing did know.
> 'Tis a medley of scraps, fine verse, and fine prose,
> And some things not very like either, God knows.
> The soft First Effusions of Beaux and of Belles,
> Of future Lord Byrons and sweet L. E. L.'s.

L. E. L. was, of course, the unhappy Letitia Landon, a famous contributor to the published albums.

"My tragi comedy." Still "The Wife's Trial." Kemble was Charles Kemble, manager of Covent Garden Theatre. The play was never acted.

"Your refusal to lend your poetical sanction." This is not clear, but I think the meaning to be deducible. The Icon was Pulham's etching of Lamb. Evans was William Evans, who had grangerised Byron's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (see the note on page 532). I take it that he was now making another collection of portraits of poets and was asking other poets, their friends, to write verses upon them. In this way he had applied through Lamb to Barton for verses on Pulham's Elia, and had been refused. This is, of course, only conjecture.

"Your Drummonds"—your bankers. Barton's bankers were the Alexanders, a Quaker firm.

"James Naylor." Barton had paraphrased Nayler's "Testimony" (see page 644).

See Appendix II., page 975, for a letter to R. S. Jameson.]

LETTER 406

CHARLES LAMB TO P. G. PATMORE

Mrs. Leishman's, Chace, Enfield,
September, 1827.

DEAR Patmore—Excuse my anxiety—but how is Dash? (I should have asked if Mrs. Patmore kept her rules, and was improving—but Dash came uppermost. The order of our thoughts should be the order of our writing.) Goes he muzzled, or *aperto ore?* Are his intellects sound, or does he wander a little in *his* conversation? You cannot be too careful to watch the first symptoms of incoherence. The first illogical snarl he makes, to St. Luke's with him! All the dogs here are going mad, if you believe the overseers; but I protest they seem to me very rational and collected. But nothing is so deceitful as mad people to those who are not used to them. Try him with hot water. If he won't lick it up, it is a sign he does not like it. Does his tail wag horizontally or perpendicularly? That has decided the fate of many dogs in Enfield. Is his general deportment cheerful? I mean when he is pleased—for otherwise there is no judging. You can't be too careful. Has he bit any of the children yet? If he has, have them shot, and keep *him* for curiosity, to see if it was the hydrophobia. They say all our army in India had it at one time—but that was in *Hyder*-Ally's time. Do you get paunch for him? Take care the sheep was sane. You might pull out his teeth (if he would let you), and then you need not mind if he were as mad as a Bedlamite. It would be rather fun to see his odd ways. It might amuse Mrs. Patmore and the children. They'd have more sense than he! He'd be like a Fool kept in the family, to keep the household in good humour with their own understanding. You might teach him the mad dance set to the mad howl. *Madge Owl-et* would be nothing to him. "My, how he capers!" [*In the margin is written:*] One of the children speaks this.

[*Three lines here are erased.*] What I scratch out is a German quotation from Lessing on the bite of rabid animals; but, I remember, you don't read German. But Mrs. Patmore may, so I wish I had let it stand. The meaning in English is—"Avoid to approach an animal suspected of madness, as you would avoid fire or a precipice:—" which I think is a sensible observation. The Germans are certainly profounder than we.

If the slightest suspicion arises in your breast, that all is not right with him (Dash), muzzle him, and lead him in a string (common pack-thread will do; he don't care for twist) to Hood's, his quon-

dam master, and he'll take him in at any time. You may mention your suspicion or not, as you like, or as you think it may wound or not Mr. H.'s feelings. Hood, I know, will wink at a few follies in Dash, in consideration of his former sense. Besides, Hood is deaf, and if you hinted anything, ten to one he would not hear you. Besides, you will have discharged your conscience, and laid the child at the right door, as they say.

We are dawdling our time away very idly and pleasantly, at a Mrs. Leishman's, Chace, Enfield, where, if you come a-hunting, we can give you cold meat and a tankard. Her husband is a tailor; but that, you know, does not make her one. I knew a jailor (which rhymes), but his wife was a fine lady.

Let us hear from you respecting Mrs. Patmore's regimen. I send my love in a —— to Dash. C. LAMB.

[*On the outside of the letter was written* :—]

Seriously, I wish you would call upon Hood when you are that way. He's a capital fellow. I sent him a couple of poems—one ordered by his wife, and written to order; and 'tis a week since, and I've not heard from him. I fear something is the matter.

Omitted within

Our kindest remembrance to Mrs. P.

NOTE

[This is from Patmore's *My Friends and Acquaintances*, 1854; but again I have no confidence in Patmore's transcription.

Dash had been Hood's dog, and afterwards was Lamb's; while at one time (see page 773) Moxon seems to have had the care of it. Patmore possibly was taking Dash while the Lambs were at Mrs. Leishman's. One of the children who might be amused by the dog's mad ways was Coventry Patmore, afterwards the poet, then nearly four years old.]

LETTER 407

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN BATES DIBDIN

[P.M. September 5, 1827.]

DEAR Dib,—Emma Isola, who is with us, has opened an *ALBUM*: bring some verses with you for it on Saty evening. Any *fun* will do. I am teaching her Latin; you may make something of that. Don't be modest. For in it you shall appear,

if I rummage out some of your old pleasant letters for rhymes. But an original is better.

Has your pa[1] any scrap? C. L.

We shall be *MOST* glad to see your sister or *sisters* with you. Can't you contrive it? Write in that case.

[1] the infantile word for father.

NOTE

[On the blank pages inside the letter Dibdin seems to have jotted down ideas for his contribution to the album. Unfortunately, as I have said, the album is not forthcoming.]

LETTER 408

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN BATES DIBDIN

[P.M. September 13, 1827.]

DEAR *John*—Your verses are very pleasant, and have been adopted into the splendid Emmatic constellation, where they are not of the least magnitude. She is delighted with their merit and readiness. They are just the thing. The 14th line is found. We advertised it. Hell is cooling for want of company. We shall make it up along with our kitchen fire to roast you into our new House, where I hope you will find us in a few Sundays. We have actually taken it, and a compact thing it will be.

Kemble does not return till the month's end. My heart sometimes is good, sometimes bad, about it, as the day turns out wet or walky.

Emma has just died, choak'd with a Gerund in dum. On opening her we found a Participle in rus in the pericordium. The king never dies, which may be the reason that it always REIGNS here.

We join in loves. C. L. his orthograph.

what a pen!
the Umberella is cum bak.

LETTER 409

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN BATES DIBDIN

[P.M. September 18, 1827.]

MY dear, and now more so, JOHN—

How that name smacks! what an honest, full, English, and yet withal holy and apostolic sound it bears, above the methodistical

priggish Bishoppy name of Timothy, under which I had obscured your merits!

What I think of the paternal verses, you shall read within, which I assure you is not pen praise but heart praise.

It is the gem of the Dibdin Muses.

I have got all my books into my new house, and their readers in a fortnight will follow, to whose joint converse nobody shall be more welcome than you, and *any of yours*.

The house is perfection to our use and comfort.

Milton is come. I wish Wordsworth were here to meet him. The next importation is of pots and saucepans, window curtains, crockery and such base ware.

The pleasure of moving, when Becky moves for you. O the moving Becky!

I hope you will come and *warm* the house with the first.

From my temporary domicile, Enfield.

ELIA, that "is to go."—

NOTE

[The paternal verses were probably a contribution by Charles Dibdin the Younger for Emma Isola's album. The Lambs were just moving to Enfield for good, as they hoped (see next letter). Milton was the portrait.]

LETTER 410

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS HOOD

Tuesday [September 18, 1827].

DEAR Hood,

If I have any thing in my head, I will send it to Mr. Watts. Strictly speaking he should have had my Album verses, but a very intimate friend importund me for the trifles, and I believe I forgot Mr. Watts, or lost sight at the time of his similar Souvenir. Jamieson conveyed the farce from me to Mrs. C. Kemble, *he* will not be in town before the 27th. Give our kind loves to all at Highgate, and tell them that we have finally torn ourselves out right away from Colebrooke, where I had *no* health, and are about to domiciliate for good at Enfield, where I have experienced *good*.

Lord what good hours do we keep!
How quietly we sleep!

See the rest in the Complete Angler. We have got our books into our new house. I am a drayhorse if I was not asham'd of the in-

digested dirty lumber, as I toppled 'em out of the cart, and blest Becky that came with 'em for her having an unstuff'd brain with such rubbish. We shall get in by Michael's mass. Twas with some pain we were evuls'd from Colebrook. You may find some of our flesh sticking to the door posts. To change habitations is to die to them, and in my time I have died seven deaths. But I dont know whether every such change does not bring with it a rejuvenescence. Tis an enterprise, and shoves back the sense of death's approximating, which tho' not terrible to me, is at all times particularly distasteful. My house-deaths have generally been periodical, recurring after seven years, but this last is premature by half that time. Cut off in the flower of Colebrook. The Middletonian stream and all its echoes mourn. Even minnows dwindle. A parvis fiunt MINIMI. I fear to invite Mrs. Hood to our new mansion, lest she envy it, & rote [? rout] us. But when we are fairly in, I hope she will come & try it. I heard she & you were made uncomfortable by some unworthy to be cared for attacks, and have tried to set up a feeble counteraction thro' the Table Book of last Saturday. Has it not reach'd you, that you are silent about it? Our new domicile is no manor house, but new, & externally not inviting, but furnish'd within with every convenience. Capital new locks to every door, capital grates in every room, with nothing to pay for incoming & the rent £10 less than the Islington one. It was built a few years since at £1100 expence, they tell me, & I perfectly believe it. And I get it for £35 exclusive of moderate taxes. We think ourselves most lucky. It is not our intention to abandon Regent Street, & West End perambulations (monastic & terrible thought!), but occasionally to breathe the FRESHER AIR of the metropolis. We shall put up a bedroom or two (all we want) for occasional ex-rustication, where we shall visit, not be visited. Plays too we'll see,—perhaps our own. Urbani Sylvani, & Sylvan Urbanuses in turns. Courtiers for a spurt, then philosophers. Old homely tell-truths and learn-truths in the virtuous shades of Enfield, Liars again and mocking gibers in the coffee houses & resorts of London. What can a mortal desire more for his bi-parted nature?

O the curds & cream you shall eat with us here!

O the turtle soup and lobster sallads we shall devour with you there!

O the old books we shall peruse here!

O the new nonsense we shall trifle over there!

O Sir T. Browne!—here.

O Mr. Hood & Mr. Jerdan there.

thine,

C (urbanus) L (sylvanus) (ELIA ambo)——

Inclos'd are verses which Emma sat down to write, her first, on the eve after your departure. Of course they are only for Mrs. H.'s perusal. They will shew at least, that one of our party is not willing to cut old friends. What to call 'em I don't know. Blank verse they are not, because of the rhymes—Rhimes they are not, because of the blank verse. Heroics they are not, because they are lyric, lyric they are not, because of the Heroic measure. They must be call'd EMMAICS.——

NOTE

[This is the present form of Lamb's first house at Enfield (1904). I imagine that it was smaller in Lamb's time.

Mr. Watts was Alaric A. Watts, a great maker of albums and anthologies.

"Lord what good hours . . ." From Cotton's "Retirement" in the *Complete Angler*. It appeared first in the 5th edition, 1676.

"*A parvis fiunt minimi.*" Their smallness grows to a minimum (minnowmum).

"Thro' the *Table Book*." Lamb contributed to Hone's *Table Book* a prose paraphrase of Hood's *Plea of the Midsummer Fairies*, just published, which had been dedicated to him, under the title "The Defeat of Time." In a previous number Moxon had addressed

to Hood a eulogistic sonnet on the same subject. The attacks on Hood I have not sought.

"We shall put up a bedroom." This project was very imperfectly carried out. Indeed Lamb practically lost London from this date, his subsequent visits there being as a rule not fortunate.

"Urbani Sylvani . . ." The dynastic name of the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine* was Sylvanus Urban, signifying, say, the Woodland Townsman.

"Mr. Jerdan"—William Jerdan, editor of the *Literary Gazette*.

"Emmaics." These verses are no longer forthcoming.]

LETTER 411

CHARLES LAMB TO HENRY COLBURN

[Dated at end: September 25, 1827.]

DEAR Sir—I beg leave in the warmest manner to recommend to your notice Mr. Moxon, the Bearer of this, if by any chance yourself should want a steady hand in your business, or know of any Publisher that may want such a one. He is at present in the house of Messrs. Longman and Co., where he has been established for more than six years, and has the conduct of one of the four departments of the Country line. A difference respecting Salary, which he expected to be a little raised on his last promotion, makes him wish to try to better himself. I believe him to be a young man of the highest integrity, and a thorough man of business; and should not have taken the liberty of recommending him, if I had not thought him capable of being highly useful.

I am,
Sir,
with great respect,
your hble Servt
CHARLES LAMB.

Enfield, Chace Side,
25th Sep. 1827.

NOTE

[Moxon did not go to Colburn, but to Hurst & Co. in St. Paul's Churchyard.]

LETTER 412

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[No date. ? Sept. 26, 1827.]

Pray, send me the Table Book.

DEAR M. Our pleasant meeting[s] for some time are suspended. My sister was taken very ill in a few hours after you left us (I had suspected it),—and I must wait eight or nine weeks in slow hope of her recovery. It is her old complaint. You will say as much to the Hoods, and to Mrs. Lovekin, and Mrs. Hazlitt, with my kind love.

We are in the House, that is all. I hope one day we shall both enjoy it, and see our friends again. But till then I must be a solitary nurse.

I am trying Becky's sister to be with her, so don't say anything to Miss James.

Yours truly

CH. LAMB.

Monday. I will send your books soon.

NOTE

[Miss James was, as we have seen, Mary Lamb's regular nurse. She had subsequently to be sent for. I do not identify Mrs. Lovekin.]

LETTER 413

CHARLES LAMB TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

[Dated at end: October 1 (1827).]

DEAR R.—I am settled for life I hope, at Enfield. I have taken the prettiest compactest house I ever saw, near to Antony Robinson's, but alas! at the expence of poor Mary, who was taken ill of her old complaint the night before we got into it. So I must suspend the pleasure I expected in the surprise you would have had in coming down and finding us householders.

Farewell, till we can all meet comfortable. Pray, apprise Martin Burney. Him I longed to have seen with you, but our house is too small to meet either of you without her knowledge.

God bless you.

C. LAMB,

Chase Side
1st Octr.

NOTE

[Antony Robinson, a prominent Unitarian, a friend but no relation of Crabb Robinson's, had died in the previous January. His widow still lived at Enfield.]

LETTER 414

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN BATES DIBDIN

[P.M. October 2, 1827.]

MY dear Dibdin, It gives me great pain to have to say that I cannot have the pleasure of seeing you for some time. We are in our house, but Mary has been seized with one of her periodical disorders—a temporary derangement—which commonly lasts for two months. You shall have the first notice of her convalescence. Can you not send your manuscript by the Coach? directed to Chase Side, next to Mr. Westwood's Insurance office. I will take great care of it.

Yours most Truly C. LAMB.

LETTER 415

CHARLES LAMB TO BARRON FIELD

Oct. 4th, 1827.

I AM not in humour to return a fit reply to your pleasant letter. We are fairly housed at Enfield, and an angel shall not persuade me to wicked London again. We have now six sabbath days in a week for—*none!* The change has worked on my sister's mind, to make her ill; and I must wait a tedious time before we can hope to enjoy this place in unison. Enjoy it, when she recovers, I know we shall. I see no shadow, but in her illness, for repenting the step! For Mathews—I know my own utter unfitness for such a task. I am no hand at describing costumes, a great requisite in an account of mannered pictures. I have not the slightest acquaintance with pictorial language even. An imitator of me, or rather pretender to be *me*, in his Rejected Articles, has made me minutely describe the dresses of the poissardes at Calais! —I could as soon resolve Euclid. I have no eye for forms and fashions. I substitute analysis, and get rid of the phenomenon by slurring in for it its impression. I am sure you must have observed this defect, or peculiarity, in my writings; else the delight would

be incalculable in doing such a thing for Mathews, whom I greatly like—and Mrs. Mathews, whom I almost greatlier like. What a feast 'twould be to be sitting at the pictures painting 'em into words; but I could almost as soon make words into pictures. I speak this deliberately, and not out of modesty. I pretty well know what I can't do.

My sister's verses are homely, but just what they should be; I send them, not for the poetry, but the good sense and good-will of them. I was beginning to transcribe; but Emma is sadly jealous of its getting into more hands, and I won't spoil it in her eyes by divulging it. Come to Enfield, and *read it*. As my poor cousin, the bookbinder, now with God, told me, most sentimentally, that having purchased a picture of fish at a dead man's sale, his heart ached to see how the widow grieved to part with it, being her dear husband's favourite; and he almost apologised for his generosity by saying he could not help telling the widow she was "welcome to come and look at it"—e.g. at *his house*—"as often as she pleased." There was the germ of generosity in an uneducated mind. He had just *reading* enough from the backs of books for the "*nec sinit esse feros*"—had he read inside, the same impulse would have led him to give back the two-guinea thing—with a request to see it, now and then, at *her* house. We are parroted into delicacy.—Thus you have a tale for a Sonnet.

Adieu! with (imagine both) our loves. C. Lamb.

Note

[The suggestion had been made to Lamb, through Barron Field, that he should write a descriptive catalogue of Charles Mathews' collection of theatrical portraits; Lamb having already touched upon them in his "Old Actors" articles in the *London Magazine* (see Vol. II. of this edition, page 294). When they were exhibited, after Mathews' death, at the Pantheon in Oxford Street, Lamb's remarks were appended to the catalogue *raisonné*. They are now at the Garrick Club.

"An imitator of me." P. G. Patmore's *Rejected Articles*, 1826, leads off with "An Unsentimental Journey" by Elia, which is, except for a fitful superficial imitation of some of Lamb's mannerisms, as unlike him as could well be. The description of the butterwomen's dress, to which Lamb refers, will illustrate the divergence between Elia and his parodist:—

Her attire is fashioned as follows: and it differs from all her tribe only in the relative arrangement of its colours. On the body a crimson jacket, of a thick, solid texture, and tight to the shape; but without any pretence at ornament. This is met at the waist (which is neither long, nor short, but exactly where nature placed it) by a dark blue petticoat, of a still thicker texture, so that it hangs in large plaits

where it is gathered in behind. Over this, in front, is tied tightly round the waist, so as to keep all trim and compact, a dark apron, the string of which passes over the little fulled skirt of the jacket behind, and makes it stick out smartly and tastily, while it clips the waist in. The head-gear consists of a sort of mob cap, nothing of which but the edge round the face can be seen, on account of the kerchief (of flowered cotton) which is passed over it, hood fashion, and half tied under the chin. This head-kerchief is in place of the bonnet—a thing not to be seen among the whole five hundred females who make up this pleasant show. Indeed, varying the colours of the different articles, this description applies to every dress of the whole assembly; except that in some the fineness of the day has dispensed with the kerchief, and left the snow-white cap exposed; and in others, the whole figure (except the head) is coyishly covered and concealed by a large hooded cloak of black cloth, daintily lined with silk, and confined close up to the throat by an embossed silver clasp, but hanging loosely down to the heels, in thick, full folds. The petticoat is very short; the trim ancles are cased in close-fit hose of dark, sober, slate colour; and the shoes, though thick and serviceable like all the rest of the costume, fit the foot as neatly as those which are not made to walk in.

Patmore tells us that his first meeting with the Lambs was immediately after they had first seen his book; and they left the house intent upon reading it.

"My sister's verses." I think these would probably be the lines on Emma learning Latin which I have quoted on page 740.

"*Nec sinit esse feros.*"

> Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes
> Emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros.
> Ovid, *Ep.* 2, 9, 47.

"A careful study of the liberal arts refines the manners and prevents their becoming rude."

Here should come a very pleasant letter from Lamb to Dodwell, of the India House, dated October 7, 1827, not available for this edition (printed by Canon Ainger). Lamb thanks Dodwell, to whom there is an earlier letter extant (see page 490), for a pig. He first describes his new house at Enfield, and then breaks off about the cooking of the pig, bidding Becky do it "nice and *crips*." The rest is chaff concerning the India House and Dodwell's fellow-clerks.]

LETTER 416

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM HONE

[No date. ? Oct., 1827.]

DEAR Hone,—having occasion to write to Clarke I put in a bit to you. I see no Extracts in this No. You should have three sets in hand, one long one in particular from Atreus and Thyestes, terribly fine. Don't spare 'em; with fragments, divided as you please, they'll hold out to Xmas. What I have to say is enjoined me most seriously to say to you by Moxon. Their country customers grieve at getting the Table Book so late. It is indispensable it should appear on Friday. Do it but *once*, & you'll never know the difference.

FABLE

A boy at my school, a cunning fox, for one penny ensured himself a hot roll & butter every morning for ever. Some favor'd ones were allowed a roll & butter to their breakfasts. He had none. But he bought one one morning. What did he do? He did not eat it, but cutting it in two, sold each one of the halves to a half-breakfasted Blue Boy for *his* whole roll to-morrow. The next day he had a whole roll to eat, and two halves to swap with other two boys, who had eat their cake & were still not satiated, for whole ones to-morrow. So on ad infinitum. By one morning's abstinence he feasted seven years after.

APPLICATION

Bring out the next N°. on Friday, for country correspondents' sake. I[t] will be one piece of exertion, and you will go right ever after, for you will have just the time you had before, to bring it out ever after by the Friday.

You don't know the difference in getting a thing early. Your correspondents are your authors. You don't know how an author frets to know the world has got his contribution, when he finds it not on his breakfast table.

ONCE in this case is EVER without a grain of trouble afterwds.

I won't like you or speak to you if you don't try it once.

Yours, on that condition,

C. LAMB.

NOTE

[This letter is dated by Mr. Hazlitt conjecturally 1826, but I think it more probably October, 1827, as the extracts (passages from Crowne's "Thyestes") contributed by Lamb to Hone's *Table Book* were printed late in 1827 (see Vol. IV. of this edition, page 546).

In Lamb's next note to Hone he says how glad he was to receive the *Table Book* early on Friday: the result of the fable.]

LETTER 417

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS HOOD

[No date. ? 1827.]

DEAR H.,—Emma has a favour, besides a bed, to ask of Mrs. Hood. Your parcel was gratifying. We have all been pleased with Mrs. Leslie; I speak it most sincerely. There is much manly sense with a feminine expression, which is my definition of ladies' writing.

NOTE

[*Mrs. Leslie and Her Grandchildren*, 1827, was the title of a book for children by Mrs. Reynolds, mother of John Hamilton Reynolds and Mrs. Hood, and wife of the Writing Master at Christ's Hospital.]

LETTER 418

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[No date. Late 1827.]

MY dear B. B.—You will understand my silence when I tell you that my sister, on the very eve of entering into a new house we have taken at Enfield, was surprised with an attack of one of her sad long illnesses, which deprive me of her society, tho' not of her domestication, for eight or nine weeks together. I see her, but it does her no good. But for this, we have the snuggest, most comfortable house, with every thing most compact and desirable. Colebrook is a wilderness. The Books, prints, etc., are come here, and the New River came down with us. The familiar Prints, the Bust, the Milton, seem scarce to have changed their rooms. One of her last observations was "how frightfully like this room is to our room in Islington"—our up-stairs room, she meant. How I hope you will come some better day, and judge of it! We have tried quiet here for four months, and I will answer for the comfort of it enduring.

On emptying my bookshelves I found an Ulysses, which I will send to A. K. when I go to town, for her acceptance—unless the Book be out of print. One likes to have one copy of every thing one does. I neglected to keep one of "Poetry for Children," the joint production of Mary and me, and it is not to be had for love or money. It had in the title-page "by the author of Mrs. Lester's School." Know you any one that has it, and would exchange it?

Strolling to Waltham Cross the other day, I hit off these lines. It is one of the Crosses which Edwd 1st caused to be built for his wife at every town where her corpse rested between Northamptonsh^r and London.

A stately Cross each sad spot doth attest,
Whereat the corpse of Elinor did rest,
From Herdby fetch'd—her Spouse so honour'd her—
To sleep with royal dust at Westminster.
And, if less pompous obsequies were thine,
Duke Brunswick's daughter, princely Caroline,
Grudge not, great ghost, nor count thy funeral losses:
Thou in thy life-time had'st thy share of crosses.

My dear B. B.—My head akes with this little excursion. Pray accept 2 sides for 3 for once.

And believe me
yours sadly C. L.

Chace side Enfield.

NOTE

[" An Ulysses "—Lamb's book for children, *The Adventures of Ulysses*, 1808.

The *Poetry for Children*. The known copies of the first edition of this work can be counted on the fingers (see note on page 863).

" A stately Cross . . ." These verses were printed in the *Englishman's Magazine* in September, 1831. Lamb's sympathies were wholly with Caroline of Brunswick, as his epigrams in *The Champion* show (see Vol. V. of this edition).]

LETTER 419

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. December 4, 1827.]

MY dear B. B.—I have scarce spirits to write, yet am harass'd with not writing. Nine weeks are completed, and Mary does not get any better. It is perfectly exhausting. Enfield and every thing is very gloomy. But for long experience, I should fear her ever getting well.

I feel most thankful for the spinsterly attentions of your sister. Thank the kind "knitter in the sun."

What nonsense seems verse, when one is seriously out of hope and spirits! I mean that at this time I have some nonsense to write, pain of incivility. Would to the fifth heaven no coxcombess had invented Albums.

I have not had a Bijoux, nor the slightest notice from Pickering about omitting 4 out of 5 of my things. The best thing is never to hear of such a thing as a bookseller again, or to think there are publishers: second hand Stationers and Old Book Stalls for me. Authorship should be an idea of the Past.

Old Kings, old Bishops, are venerable. All present is hollow.

I cannot make a Letter. I have no straw, not a pennyworth of chaff, only this may stop your kind importunity to know about us.

Here is a comfortable house, but no tenants. One does not make a household.

Do not think I am quite in despair, but in addition to hope protracted, I have a stupifying cold and obstructing headache, and the sun is dead.

I will not fail to apprise you of the revival of a Beam.

Meantime accept this, rather than think I have forgotten you all.

Best rememb

Yours and theirs truly, C. L.

NOTE

["Knitter in the sun":—

> The spinsters and the knitters in the sun.
> "Twelfth Night," II., 4, 45.

"A Bijoux." See note on page 748.]

LETTER 420

CHARLES LAMB TO LEIGH HUNT

[No date. December, 1827.]

DEAR H.,—I am here almost in the eleventh week of the longest illness my sister ever had, and no symptoms of amendment. Some had begun, but relapsed with a change of nurse. If she ever gets well, you will like my house, and I shall be happy to show you Enfield country.

As to my head, it is perfectly at your or any one's service; either M[e]yers' or Hazlitt's, which last (done fifteen or twenty years since) White, of the Accountant's office, India House, has; he lives in Kentish Town: I forget where, but is to be found in Leadenhall daily. Take your choice. I should be proud to hang up as an alehouse sign even; or, rather, I care not about my head or anything, but how we are to get well again, for I am tired out.

God bless you and yours from the worst calamity.—Yours truly,

C. L.

Kindest remembrances to Mrs. Hunt. H.'s is in a queer dress. M.'s would be preferable *ad populum*.

NOTE

[Leigh Hunt had asked Lamb for his portrait to accompany his *Lord Byron and Some of His Contemporaries*. Lamb had been painted by Hazlitt in 1804, and by Henry Meyer, full size, in May, 1826, as well as by others. Hunt chose Meyer's picture,

which was beautifully engraved, for his book, in the large paper edition. The original is now in the India Office; a reproduction serves as the frontispiece to Vol. VI. of this edition. The Hazlitt portrait, representing Lamb in the garb of a Venetian senator, is now in the National Portrait Gallery; a reproduction serves as the frontispiece to Vol. IV. of this edition.]

LETTER 421

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM HONE

[P.M. Dec. 15, 1827.]

MY dear Hone, I read the sad accident with a careless eye, the newspaper giving a wrong name to the poor Sufferer, but learn'd the truth from Clarke. God send him ease, and you comfort in your thick misfortunes. I am in a sorry state. Tis the eleventh week of the illness, and I cannot get her well. To add to the calamity, Miss James is obliged to leave us in a day or two. We had an Enfield Nurse for seven weeks, and just as she seem'd mending, *she* was call'd away. Miss J.'s coming seem'd to put her back, and now she is going. I do not compare my sufferings to yours, but you see the world is full of troubles. I wish I could say a word to comfort you. You must cling to all that is left. I fear to ask you whether the Book is to be discontinued. What a pity, when it must have delighted so many! Let me hear about you and it, and believe me with deepest fellow feeling

Your friend
C. LAMB.

Friday eveng.

NOTE

[Hone's son Alfred, who had met with an accident, was a sculptor. The *Table Book* was to close with the year.]

LETTER 422

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[No date. ? Middle Dec., 1827.]

MY dear Allsop—Thanks for the Birds. Your announcement puzzles me sadly as nothing came. I send you back a word in your letter, which I can positively make nothing [of] and therefore

return to you as useless. It means to refer to the birds, but gives me no information. They are at the fire, however.

My sister's illness is the most obstinate she ever had. It will not go away, and I am afraid Miss James will not be able to stay above a day or two longer. I am desperate to think of it sometimes. 'Tis eleven weeks!

The day is sad as my prospects.

With kindest love to Mrs. A. and the children,

Yours, C. L.

No Atlas this week. Poor Hone's good boy Alfred has fractured his skull, another son is returned "dead" from the Navy office, & his Book is going to be given up, not having answered. What a world of troubles this is!

NOTE

[The *Atlas* was the paper which Allsop sent to Lamb every week (see letter on page 767).]

LETTER 423

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[December 20, 1827.]

MY dear Allsop—I have writ to say to you that I hope to have a comfortable Xmas-day with Mary, and I can not bring myself to go from home at present. Your kind offer, and the kind consent of the young Lady to come, we feel as we should do; pray accept all of you our kindest thanks: at present I think a visitor (good & excellent as we remember her to be) might a little put us out of our way. Emma is with us, and our small house just holds us, without obliging Mary to sleep with Becky, &c.

We are going on extremely comfortably, & shall soon be in capacity of seeing our friends. Much weakness is left still. With thanks and old remembrs, Yours, C. L.

LETTER 424

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. Dec. 22, 1827.]

MY dear Moxon, I am at length able to tell you that we are all doing well, and shall be able soon to see our friends as usual. If you will venture a winter walk to Enfield tomorrow week

(Sunday 30th) you will find us much as usual; we intend a delicious quiet Christmas day, dull and friendless, for we have not spirits for festivities. Pray communicate the good news to the Hoods, and say I hope he is better. I should be thankful for any of the books you mention, but I am so apprehensive of their miscarriage by the stage,—at all events I want none just now. Pray call and see Mrs. Lovekin, I heard she was ill; say we shall be glad to see them some fine day after a week or so.

May I beg you to call upon Miss James, and say that we are quite well, and that Mary hopes she will excuse her writing herself yet; she knows that it is rather troublesome to her to write. We have rec^d her letter. Farewell, till we meet.

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

Enfield.

LETTER 425

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[No date. End of 1827.]

MY dear B.—We are all pretty well again and comfortable, and I take a first opportunity of sending the Adventures of Ulysses, hoping that among us—Homer, Chapman, and *Co.*—we shall afford you some pleasure. I fear, it is out of print, if not, A. K. will accept it, with wishes it were bigger; if another copy is not to be had, it reverts to me and my heirs *for ever*. With it I send a trumpery book; to which, without my knowledge, the Editor of the Bijoux has contributed Lucy's verses: I am asham'd to ask her acceptance of the trash accompanying it. Adieu to Albums—for a great while, I said when I came here, and had not been fixed two days but my Landlord's daughter (not at the Pot house) requested me to write in her female friend's, and in her own; if I go to thou art there also, O all pervading ALBUM! All over the Leeward Islands, in Newfoundland, and the Back Settlements, I understand there is no other reading. They haunt me. I die of Albo-phobia!

NOTE

["A trumpery book." I have not found it (see Letter 405).

Writing in the *Englishman's Magazine* in 1831, in a review of his own *Album Verses*, Lamb amplifies his sentiments on albums (see Vol. I., page 340).]

LETTER 426

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[January 9, 1828.]

DEAR Allsop—I have been very poorly and nervous lately, but am recovering sleep, &c. I do not invite or make engagements for particular days; but I need not say how pleasant your dropping in *any* Sunday morng would be. Perhaps Jameson would accompany you. Pray beg him to keep an accurate record of the warning I sent by him to old Pan, for I dread lest he should at the 12 months' end deny the warning. The house is his daughter's, but we took it through him, and have paid the rent to his receipts for his daughter's. Consult J. if he thinks the warning sufficient. I am very nervous, or have been, about the house; lost my sleep, & expected to be ill; but slumbered gloriously last night golden slumbers. I shall not relapse. You fright me with your inserted slips in the most welcome Atlas. They begin to charge double for it, & call it two sheets. How can I confute them by opening it, when a note of yours might slip out, & we get in a hobble? When you write, write real letters. Mary's best love & mine to Mrs. A. Yours ever, C. LAMB.

NOTE

[I cannot explain the business part of this letter.
"Golden slumbers." From Dekker's superb poem "Content":—

Art thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers.]

LETTER 427

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. (? January, Sunday) 1828.]

DEAR Moxon I have to thank you for despatching so much business for me. I am uneasy respecting the enclosed receipts which you sent me and are dated Jan. 1827. Pray get them chang'd by Mr. Henshall to 1828. I have been in a very nervous way since I saw you. Pray excuse me to the Hoods for not answering his very pleasant letter. I am very poorly. The "Keepsake" I hope is return'd. I sent it back by Mrs. Hazlitt on Thursday. 'Twas blotted outside when it came. The rest I think are mine. My heart bleeds about poor Hone, that such an agreeable

book, and a Book there seem'd no reason should not go on for ever, should be given up, and a thing substituted which in its Nature cannot last. Don't send me any more "Companions," for it only vexes me about the Table Book. This is not weather to hope to see any body *to day*, but without any particular invitations, pray consider that we are *at any time* most glad to see you, You (with Hunt's "Lord Byron" or Hazlitt's "Napoleon" in your hand) or You simply with your switch &c. The night was damnable and the morning is not too bless-able. If you get my dates changed, I will not trouble you with business for some time. Best of all remembces to the Hoods, with a malicious congratulation on their friend Rice's advancemt.

Yours truly C. LAMB.

NOTE

["The rest I think are mine." The rest of the blots?

Hone's *Table Book* ceased with 1827: it was succeeded by a reprint, in monthly parts, of Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*.

The Companion would be the periodical started by Leigh Hunt in 1828.

"Hazlitt's 'Napoleon.'" Of this work the first two volumes appeared in 1828, and the next two in 1830.

"Their friend Rice's advancement." I cannot say to what this would refer. Rice was Edward Rice.]

LETTER 428

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. Feb. 18, 1828.]

DEAR M. I had rather thought to have seen you yesterday, or I should have written to thank you for your attentions in the Book way &c. Hone's address is, *22* Belvidere Place, Southwark. 'Tis near the Obelisk. I can only say we shall be most glad to see you, when weather suits, and that it will be a joyful surprisal to see the Hoods. I should write to them, but am poorly and nervous. Emma is very proud of her *Valentine*. Mary does not immediately want Books, having a damn'd consignment of Novels in MS. from Malta: which I wish the Mediterranean had in its guts. Believe me yours truly C. L.

Monday.

NOTE

[Emma's valentine probably came from Moxon, who, I feel sure, in spite of Lamb's utterance in Letter 400, had not yet told his love, if it had really budded.

"Novels in MS."—Lady Stoddart's, we may suppose (see Letter 403).]

LETTER 429

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE

Enfield, 25 Feb. [1828].

MY dear Clarke,—You have been accumulating on me such a heap of pleasant obligations that I feel uneasy in writing as to a Benefactor. Your smaller contributions, the little weekly rills, are refreshments in the Desart, but your large books were feasts. I hope Mrs. Hazlitt, to whom I encharged it, has taken Hunt's Lord B. to the Novellos. His picture of Literary Lordship is as pleasant as a disagreeable subject can be made, his own poor man's Education at dear Christ's is as good and hearty as the subject. Hazlitt's speculative episodes are capital; I skip the Battles. But how did I deserve to have the Book? The *Companion* has too much of Madam Pasta. Theatricals have ceased to be popular attractions. His walk home after the Play is as good as the best of the old Indicators. The watchmen are emboxed in a niche of fame, save the skaiting one that must be still fugitive. I wish I could send a scrap for good will. But I have been most seriously unwell and nervous a long long time. I have scarce mustered courage to begin this short note, but conscience duns me.

I had a pleasant letter from your sister, greatly over-acknowledging my poor sonnet. I think I should have replied to it, but tell her I think so. Alas for sonnetting, 'tis as the nerves are; all the summer I was dawdling among green lanes, and verses came as thick as fancies. I am sunk winterly below prose and zero.

But I trust the vital principle is only as under snow. That I shall yet laugh again.

I suppose the great change of place affects me, but I could not have lived in Town, I could not bear company.

I see Novello flourishes in the Del Capo line, and dedications are not forgotten. I read the *Atlas*. When I pitched on the Ded^{n} I looked for the Broom of "*Cowden* knows" to be harmonized, but 'twas summat of Rossini's.

I want to hear about Hone, does he stand above water, how is

his son? I have delay'd writing to him, till it seems impossible. Break the ice for me.

The wet ground here is intolerable, the sky above clear and delusive, but under foot quagmires from night showers, and I am cold-footed and moisture-abhorring as a cat; nevertheless I yesterday tramped to Waltham Cross; perhaps the poor bit of exertion necessary to scribble this was owing to that unusual bracing.

If I get out, I shall get stout, and then something will out—I mean for the *Companion*—you see I rhyme insensibly.

Traditions are rife here of one Clarke a schoolmaster, and a runaway pickle named Holmes, but much obscurity hangs over it. Is it possible they can be any relations?

'Tis worth the research, when you can find a sunny day, with ground firm, &c. Master Sexton is intelligent, and for half-a-crown he'll pick you up a Father.

In truth we shall be most glad to see any of the Novellian circle, middle of the week such as can come, or Sunday, as can't. But Spring will burgeon out quickly, and then, we'll talk more.

You'd like to see the improvements on the Chase, the new Cross in the market-place, the Chandler's shop from whence the rods were fetch'd. They are raised a farthing since the spread of Education. But perhaps you don't care to be reminded of the Holofernes' days, and nothing remains of the old laudable profession, but the clear, firm, impossible-to-be-mistaken schoolmaster text hand with which is subscribed the ever-welcome name of Chas. Cowden C. Let me crowd in both our loves to all. C. L.

Let me never be forgotten to include in my remembces my good friend and whilom correspondent Master Stephen.

How, especially, is Victoria?

I try to remember all I used to meet at Shacklewell. The little household, cake-producing, wine-bringing out Emma—the old servant, that didn't stay, and ought to have staid, and was always very dirty and friendly, and Miss H., the counter-tenor with a fine voice, whose sister married Thurtell. They all live in my mind's eye, and Mr. N.'s and Holmes's walks with us half back after supper. Troja fuit!

NOTE

["*The Companion*." Leigh Hunt's paper lasted only for seven months. Madame Pasta, of whom too much was written, was Giudetta Pasta (1798-1865), a singer of unusual compass for whom Bellini wrote "La Somnambula."

The following is the account of the Sliding Watchman in the essay, "Walks Home by Night in Bad Weather. Watchmen":—

But the oddest of all was the *Sliding* Watchman. Think of walking up a street in the depth of a frosty winter, with long ice in the gutters, and sleet over head, and then figure to yourself a sort of bale of a man in white, coming towards you with a lantern in one hand, and an umbrella over his head. It was the oddest mixture of luxury and hardship, of juvenility and old age! But this looked agreeable. Animal spirits carry everything before them; and our invincible friend seemed a watchman for Rabelais. Time was run at and butted by him like a goat. The slide seemed to bear him half through the night at once; he slipped from out of his box and his common-places at one rush of a merry thought, and seemed to say, "Everything's in imagination;—here goes the whole weight of my office."

"Your sister"—Mrs. Isabella Jane Towers, author of *The Children's Fireside*, 1828, and other books for children, to whom Lamb had sent the following sonnet:—

Lady Unknown, who crav'st from me Unknown
The trifle of a verse these leaves to grace,
How shall I find fit matter? with what face
Address a face that ne'er to me was shown?
Thy looks, tones, gesture, manners, and what not,
Conjecturing, I wander in the dark.
I know thee only Sister to Charles Clarke!
But at that name my cold Muse waxes hot,
And swears that thou art such a one as he,
Warm, laughter-loving, with a touch of madness,
Wild, glee-provoking, pouring oil of gladness
From frank heart without guile. And, if thou be
The pure reverse of this, and I mistake—
Demure one, I will like thee for his sake.

"Novello . . . dedications . . . I read the *Atlas*." In *The Atlas* for February 17 was reviewed *Select Airs from Spohr's celebrated Opera of Faust, arranged as duetts for the Pianoforte and inscribed to his friend Charles Cowden Clarke by Vincent Novello.* Holmes was musical critic for *The Atlas.*

"Broom of *Cowden*-knows"—the old Scotch ballad—

O the broom, an the broom, an the bonny, bonny broom,
The broom o' the Cowdenknowes.

"One Clarke a schoolmaster." See note on page 559.

"Holofernes' days"—Holofernes, the schoolmaster, in "Love's Labour's Lost." Cowden Clarke had assisted his father.

"Master Stephen." I do not identify Stephen.

"Victoria"—Mary Victoria Novello, afterwards Mrs. Charles Cowden Clarke.

"At Shacklewell"—the Novellos' old home. They now lived in Bedford Street, Covent Garden.

"Whose sister married Thurtell." Thurtell, the murderer of Mr. Weare, I suppose.

"*Troja fuit!*" See note on page 456.]

LETTER 430

CHARLES LAMB TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

[P.M. Feb. 26, 1828.]

MY dear Robinson, It will be a very painful thing to us indeed, if you give up coming to see us, as we fear, on account of the nearness of the poor Lady you inquire after. It is true that on the occasion she mentions, which was on her return from last seeing her daughter, she was very heated and feverish, but there seems to be a great amendment in her since, and she has within a day or two passed a quiet evening with us. At the same time I dare not advise any thing one way or another respecting her daughter coming to live with her. I entirely disclaim the least opinion about it. If we named any thing before her, it was erroneously, on the notion that *she* was the obstacle to the plan which had been suggested of placing her daughter in a Private Family, *which seem'd your wish*. But I have quite done with the subject. If we can be of any amusement to the poor Lady, without self disturbance, we will. But come and see us after Circuit, as if she were not. You have no more affect^te friends than C. AND M. LAMB.

NOTE

["The poor Lady" was, I imagine, the widow of Antony Robinson.]

LETTER 431

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

March 19th, 1828.

MY dear M.—It is my firm determination to have nothing to do with "Forget-me-Nots"—pray excuse me as civilly as you can to Mr. Hurst. I will take care to refuse any other applications. The things which Pickering has, if to be had again, I have promised absolutely, you know, to poor Hood, from whom I had a melancholy epistle yesterday; besides that, Emma has decided objections to her own and her friend's Album verses being published; but if she gets over that, they are decidedly Hood's.

Till we meet, farewell. Loves to Dash. C. L.

NOTE

[Moxon seems to have asked Lamb for a contribution for one of Hurst's annuals, probably the *Keepsake*.

Hood was to edit *The Gem* for 1829.

"Dash."—Moxon seems to have been the present master of the dog.

Here should come a letter from Lamb to Edward Irving, not available for this edition, introducing Hone, who in later life became devout and preached at the Weigh House Chapel in Eastcheap.]

LETTER 432

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. April 21, 1828.]

DEAR B. B.—You must excuse my silence. I have been in very poor health and spirits, and cannot write letters. I only write to assure you, as you wish'd, of my existence. All that which Mitford tells you of H.'s book is rhodomontade, only H. has written unguardedly about me, and nothing makes a man more foolish than his own foolish panegyric. But I am pretty well cased to flattery, or its contrary. Neither affect[s] me a turnip's worth. Do you see the Author of May you Like it? Do you write to him? Will you give my present plea to him of ill health for not acknowledge a pretty Book with a pretty frontispiece he sent me. He is most esteem'd by me. As for subscribing to Books, in plain truth I am a man of reduced income, and don't allow myself 12 shillings a-year to buy OLD BOOKS with, which must be my Excuse. I am truly sorry for Murray's demur, but I wash my hands of all booksellers, and hope to know them no more. I am sick and poorly and must leave off, with our joint kind remembces to your daughter and friend

A. K. C. L.

NOTE

["H.'s book." In Hunt's *Lord Byron and Some of His Contemporaries* Lamb was praised very warmly.

"The Author of May you Like it"—the Rev. C. B. Tayler (see note on page 636). The book with a pretty frontispiece was *A Fireside Book*, 1828, with a frontispiece by George Cruikshank.

"Murray's demur"—an unfavourable reply, possibly to a suggestion of Barton's concerning a new volume.]

LETTER 433

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[May 1st, 1828.]

DEAR A.—I am better. Mary quite well. We expected to see you before. I can't write long letters. So a friendly love to you all.

Yours ever,
C. L.

Enfield.

This sunshine is healing.

LETTER 434

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. May 3rd, 1828.]

DEAR M.,—My friend Patmore, author of the "Months," a very pretty publication, [and] of sundry Essays in the "London," "New Monthly," &c., wants to dispose of a volume or two of "Tales." Perhaps they might Chance to suit Hurst; but be that as it may, he will call upon you, *under favor of my recommendation;* and as he is returning to France, where he lives, if you can do anything for him in the Treaty line, to save him dancing over the Channel every week, I am sure you will. I said I'd never trouble you again; but how vain are the resolves of mortal man! P. is a very hearty friendly fellow, and was poor John Scott's second, as I will be yours when you want one. May you never be mine!

Yours truly, C. L.

Enfield.

NOTE

[Patmore was the author of *The Mirror of the Months*, 1826. "John Scott's second." See note on page 434.]

LETTER 435

CHARLES LAMB TO WALTER WILSON

[Dated at end: 17 May [1828].]

DEAR Walter, The sight of your old name again was like a resurrection. It had passed away into the dimness of a dead friend. We shall be most joyful to see you here next week,—if I

understand you right—for your note dated the 10th arrived only yesterday, Friday the *16th*. Suppose I name *Thursday* next. If that don't suit, write to say so. A morning coach comes from the Bell or Bell & Crown by Leather Lane Holborn, and sets you down at our house on the Chase Side, next door to Mr. Westwood's, whom all the coachmen know—

I have four more notes to write, so dispatch this with again assuring you how happy we shall be to see you, & to discuss Defoe & old matters.

Yours truly
C. LAMB.

Enfd. Saturdy. 17th May.

NOTE

[The last letter to Wilson will be found on page 600. Lamb wrote to Hone a few days later: "Valter Vilson dines with us to-morrow. Vell! How I should like to see Hone!"]

LETTER 436

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS NOON TALFOURD

[P.M. May 20, 1828.]

MY dear Talfourd, we propose being with you on Wednesday not unearly, Mary to take a bed with you, and I with Crabbe, if, as I understand, he be of the party. Yours ever,
CH. LAMB.

NOTE

[This is the first letter to Talfourd, Lamb's future biographer. He was then living at 26 Henrietta Street, Brunswick Square. He had married in 1822. Crabb Robinson's *Diary* for May 21 tells us that Talfourd's party consisted of the Lambs, Wordsworth, Miss Anne Rutt, three barristers and himself. Lamb was in excellent spirits. He slept at Robinson's that night.]

LETTER 437

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

[No date. May, 1828.]

DEAR Wordsworth, we had meant to have tried to see Mrs. Wordsworth and Dora next Wednesday, but we are intercepted by a violent toothache which Mary has got by getting up

next morning after parting with you, to be with my going off at ½ past 8 Holborn. We are poor travellers, and moreover we have company (damn 'em) good people, Mr. Hone and an old crony not seen for 20 years, coming here on Tuesday, one stays night with us, and Mary doubts my power to get up time enough, and comfort enough, to be so far as you are. Will you name a day in the same or coming week that we can come to you in the morning, for it would plague us not to see the other two of you, whom we cannot individualize from you, before you go. It is bad enough not to see your Sister Dorothy.

God bless you sincerely

C. Lamb.

Note

[Robinson dates this letter 1810, but this is clearly wrong. It was obviously written after Lamb's liberation from the India House. If, as I suppose, the old crony is Walter Wilson, we get the date from Lamb's letters to him and to Hone, mentioned above.

By "the other two of you" Lamb means Dora Wordsworth and Johnny Wordsworth. Lamb had already seen William, as Letter 242 tells. The address of the present letter is W. Wordsworth, Esq., 12 Bryanstone Street, Portman Square.

Here should come a letter from Lamb to Cary, dated June 10, 1828, declining on account of ill-health an invitation to dinner, to meet Wordsworth. Instead he asks Cary to Enfield with Darley and Procter.]

LETTER 438

MARY LAMB TO THE THOMAS HOODS

[No date. ? Summer, 1828.]

My dear Friends,—My brother and Emma are to send you a partnership letter, but as I have a great dislike to my stupid scrap at the fag end of a dull letter, and, as I am left alone, I will say my say first; and in the first place thank you for your kind letter; it was a mighty comfort to me. Ever since you left me, I have been thinking I know not what, but every possible thing that I could invent, why you should be angry with me for something I had done or left undone during your uncomfortable sojourn with us, and now I read your letter and think and feel all is well again. Emma and her sister Harriet are gone to Theobalds Park, and Charles is gone to Barnet to cure his headache, which a good

old lady has talked him into. She came on Thursday and left us yesterday evening. I mean she was Mrs. Paris, with whom Emma's aunt lived at Cambridge, and she had so much to [tell] her about Cambridge friends, and to [tell] us about London ditto, that her tongue was never at rest through the whole day, and at night she took Hood's Whims and Oddities to bed with her and laught all night. Bless her spirits! I wish I had them and she were as mopey as I am. Emma came on Monday, and the week has passed away I know not how. But we have promised all the week that we should go and see the Picture friday or saturday, and stay a night or so with you. Friday came and we could not turn Mrs. Paris out so soon, and on friday evening the thing was wholly given up. Saturday morning brought fresh hopes; Mrs. Paris agreed to go to see the picture with us, and we were to walk to Edmonton. My Hat and my *new gown* were put on in great haste, and his honor, who decides all things here, would have it that we could not get to Edmonton in time; and there was an end of all things. Expecting to see you, I did not write.

Monday evening.

Charles and Emma are taking a second walk. Harriet is gone home. Charles wishes to know more about the Widow. Is it to be made to match a drawing? If you could throw a little more light on the subject, I think he would do it, when Emma is gone; but his time will be quite taken up with her; for, besides refreshing her Latin, he gives her long lessons in arithmetic, which she is sadly deficient in. She leaves in a week, unless she receives a renewal of her holydays, which Mrs. Williams has half promised to send her. I do verily believe that I may hope to pass the last one, or two, or three nights with you, as she is to go from London to Bury. We will write to you the instant we receive Mrs. W.'s letter. As to my poor sonnet—and it is a very poor sonnet, only [it] answered very well the purpose it was written for—Emma left it behind her, and nobody remembers more than one line of it, which is, I think, sufficient to convince you it would make no great impression in an Annual. So pray let it rest in peace, and I will make Charles write a better one instead.

This shall go to the Post to-night. If any [one] chooses to add anything to it they may. It will glad my heart to see you again.

Yours (both yours) truly and affectionately,

M. Lamb.

Becky is going by the Post office, so I will send it away. I mean to commence letter-writer to the family.

NOTE

[Mr. Hazlitt dates this letter April, 1828. The reference to the Widow, towards the end, shows that Hood was preparing *The Gem*, and, what is not generally known, that Lamb had been asked to write on that subject. As it happened, Hood wrote the essay for him and signed it Elia (see note on page 785). Mrs. Paris we have met (see note on page 547). Harriet, Emma Isola's sister, we do not hear of again. I was recently shown a copy of Lamb's *Works*, 1818, inscribed in his hand to Miss Isola: this would be Harriet Isola. Emma had just begun her duties at Fornham, in Suffolk, where she taught the children of a Mr. Williams, a clergyman. I cannot say what the Picture was. The sonnet was probably that printed in the note on page 740. Charles Lamb's and Emma's joint letter has not been preserved.]

LETTER 439

CHARLES LAMB TO B. R. HAYDON

August, 1828.

DEAR Haydon,—I have been tardy in telling you that your Chairing the Member gave me great pleasure;—'tis true broad Hogarthian fun, the High Sheriff capital. Considering, too, that you had the materials imposed upon you, and that you did not select them from the rude world as H. did, I hope to see many more such from your hand. If the former picture went beyond this I have had a loss, and the King a bargain. I longed to rub the back of my hand across the hearty canvas that two senses might be gratified. Perhaps the subject is a little discordantly placed opposite to another act of Chairing, where the huzzas were Hosannahs,—but I was pleased to see so many of my old acquaintances brought together notwithstanding.

Believe me, yours truly,
C. LAMB.

NOTE

[Haydon's "Chairing the Member" was exhibited in Bond Street this year, together with "Christ's Entry into Jerusalem," and other of his works. "The former picture" was his "Mock Election," which the King had bought for 500 guineas. For "Chairing the Member" Haydon received only half that price.

See Appendix II., page 975, for three other letters.]

LETTER 440

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. October 11, 1828.]

A SPLENDID edition of Bunyan's Pilgrim—why, the thought is enough to turn one's moral stomach. His cockle hat and staff transformed to a smart cockd beaver and a jemmy cane, his amice gray to the last Regent Street cut, and his painful Palmer's pace to the modern swagger. Stop thy friend's sacriligious hand. Nothing can be done for B. but to reprint the old cuts in as homely but good a style as possible. The Vanity Fair, and the pilgrims there—the silly soothness in his setting out countenance—the Christian idiocy (in a good sense) of his admiration of the Shepherds on the Delectable Mountains—the Lions so truly Allegorical and remote from any similitude to Pidcock's. The great head (the author's) capacious of dreams and similitudes dreaming in the dungeon. Perhaps you don't know *my* edition, what I had when a child: if you do, can you bear new designs from—Martin, enameld into copper or silver plate by—Heath, accompanied with verses from Mrs. Heman's pen O how unlike his own—

> Wouldst thou divert thyself from melancholy?
> Wouldst thou be pleasant, yet be far from folly?
> Wouldst thou read riddles and their explanation?
> Or else be drowned in thy contemplation?
> Dost thou love picking meat? or wouldst thou see
> A man i' th' clouds, and hear him speak to thee?
> Wouldst thou be in a dream, and yet not sleep?
> Or wouldst thou in a moment laugh and weep?
> Or wouldst thou lose thyself, and catch no harm,
> And find thyself again without a charm?
> Wouldst read *thyself*, and read thou knowst not what,
> And yet know whether thou art blest or not
> By reading the same lines? O then come hither,
> And lay my book, thy head and heart together.
>
> JOHN BUNYAN.

Shew me such poetry in any of the 15 forthcoming combinations of show and emptiness, yclept Annuals. Let me whisper in your ear that wholesome sacramental bread is not more nutritious than papistical wafer stuff, than these (to head and heart) exceed the visual frippery of Mitford's Salamander God, baking himself up to the work of creation in a solar oven, not yet by the terms of the context itself existing. Blake's ravings made genteel. So there's verses for thy verses; and now let me tell you that the sight of your hand gladdend me. I have been daily trying to write to you, but paralysed. You have spurd me on this tiny effort, and at

intervals I hope to hear from and talk to you. But my spirits have been in a deprest way for a long long time, and they are things which must be to you of faith, for who can explain depression? Yes I am hooked into the Gem, but only for some lines written on a dead infant of the Editor's, which being as it were his property, I could not refuse their appearing, but I hate the paper, the type, the gloss, the dandy plates, the names of contributors poked up into your eyes in 1st page, and whistled thro' all the covers of magazines, the barefaced sort of emulation, the unmodest candidateship, bro^t^ into so little space—in those old Londons a signature was lost in the wood of matter—the paper coarse (till latterly, which spoil'd them)—in short I detest to appear in an Annual. What a fertile genius (an[d] a quiet good soul withal) is Hood. He has 50 things in hand, farces to supply the Adelphi for the season, a comedy for one of the great theatres, just ready, a whole entertainment by himself for Mathews and Yates to figure in, a meditated Comic Annual for next year, to be nearly done by himself.—You'd like him very much. Wordsworth I see has a good many pieces announced in one of em, not our Gem. W. Scott has distributed himself like a bribe haunch among 'em. Of all the poets, Cary has had the good sense to keep quite clear of 'em, with Clergy-gentle-manly right notions. Don't think I set up for being proud in this point, I like a bit of flattery tickling my vanity as well as any one. But these pompous masquerades without masks (naked names or faces) I hate. So there's a bit of my mind. Besides they infallibly cheat you, I mean the booksellers. If I get but a copy, I only expect it from Hood's being my friend. Coleridge has lately been here. He too is deep among the Prophets—the Year-servers—the mob of Gentlemen Annuals. But they'll cheat him, I know.

And now, dear B. B., the Sun shining out merrily, and the dirty clouds we had yesterday having washd their own faces clean with their own rain, tempts me to wander up Winchmore Hill, or into some of the delightful vicinages of Enfield, which I hope to show you at some time when you can get a few days up to the great Town. Believe me it would give both of us great pleasure to show you all three (we can lodge you) our pleasant farms and villages.—

We both join in kindest loves to you and yours.—

CH. LAMB REDIVIVUS.

Saturday.

NOTE

[The edition of Bunyan was that published for Barton's friend, John Major, and John Murray in 1830, with a life of Bunyan by Southey, and illustrations by John Martin and W. Harvey, and a

prefatory poem not by Mrs. Hemans but by Bernard Barton immediately before Bunyan's "Author's Apology for his Book," from which Lamb quotes.

"Pidcock's." Pidcock showed his lions at Bartholomew Fair; he was succeeded by Polito of Exeter Change.

"Heath." This was Charles Heath (1785-1848), son of James Heath, a great engraver of steel plates for the Annuals.

"Mitford's Salamander God." I cannot explain this, except by Mr. Macdonald's supposition that Lamb meant to write "Martin's."

"The Gem." See note on page 785.

Hood's entertainment for Mathews and Frederick Yates, then joint-managers of the Adelphi, I have not identified. Authors' names on play-bills were, in those days, unimportant. The play was the thing.

"Like a bribe haunch." "Divide me like a bribe-buck, each a haunch," says Falstaff to Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Page ("Merry Wives," V., 5, 27).

Coleridge and the Annuals. For example, Coleridge's "Names" was in the *Keepsake* for 1829; his "Lines written in the Album at Elbingerode" in part in the *Amulet* for 1829. He had also contributed previously to the *Literary Souvenir*, the *Amulet* and the *Bijou*.

Here should come an unprinted note from Lamb to Charles Mathews, dated October 27, 1828, not available for this edition, referring to the farce "The Pawnbroker's Daughter," which Lamb offered to Mathews for the Adelphi. As I have said, this farce was never acted.]

LETTER 441

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE

[Enfield, October, 1828.]

DEAR Clarke,—We did expect to see you with Victoria and the Novellos before this, and do not quite understand why we have not. Mrs. N. and V. [Vincent] promised us after the York expedition; a day being named before, which fail'd. 'Tis not too late. The autumn leaves drop gold, and Enfield is beautifuller—to a common eye—than when you lurked at the Greyhound. Benedicks are close, but how I so totally missed you at that time, going for my morning cup of ale duly, is a mystery. 'Twas stealing a match before one's face in earnest. But certainly we had not a dream of your appropinquity. I instantly prepared an Epithala-

mium, in the form of a Sonata—which I was sending to Novello to compose—but Mary forbid it me, as too light for the occasion—as if the subject required anything heavy—so in a tiff with her I sent no congratulation at all. Tho' I promise you the wedding was very pleasant news to me indeed. Let your reply name a day this next week, when you will come as many as a coach will hold; such a day as we had at Dulwich. My very kindest love and Mary's to Victoria and the Novellos. The enclosed is from a friend nameless, but highish in office, and a man whose accuracy of statement may be relied on with implicit confidence. He wants the *exposé* to appear in a newspaper as the "greatest piece of legal and Parliamentary villainy he ever rememb^d^," and he has had experience in both; and thinks it would answer afterwards in a cheap pamphlet printed at Lambeth in 8° sheet, as 16,000 families in that parish are interested. I know not whether the present *Examiner* keeps up the character of exposing abuses, for I scarce see a paper now. If so, you may ascertain Mr. Hunt of the strictest truth of the statement, at the peril of my head. But if this won't do, transmit it me back, I beg, per coach, or better, bring it with you. Yours unaltered, C. Lamb.

Note

[Clarke had married Mary Victoria Novello on July 5, 1828, and they had spent their honeymoon at the Greyhound, Enfield, unknown to the Lambs. See the next letter.

"The enclosed." This has vanished. Hunt was Leigh Hunt.]

LETTER 442

CHARLES LAMB TO VINCENT NOVELLO

[Enfield, November 6, 1828.]

My dear Novello,—I am afraid I shall appear rather tardy in offering my congratulations, however sincere, upon your daughter's marriage. The truth is, I had put together a little Serenata upon the occasion, but was prevented from sending it by my sister, to whose judgment I am apt to defer too much in these kind of things; so that, now I have her consent, the offering, I am afraid, will have lost the grace of seasonableness. Such as it is, I send it. She thinks it a little too old-fashioned in the manner, too much like what they wrote a century back. But I cannot write in the modern style, if I try ever so hard. I have attended to the proper divisions for the music, and you will have

little difficulty in composing it. If I may advise, make Pepusch your model, or Blow. It will be necessary to have a good second voice, as the stress of the melody lies there :—

SERENATA, FOR TWO VOICES,

On the Marriage of Charles Cowden Clarke, Esqre., to Victoria, eldest daughter of Vincent Novello, Esqre.

DUETTO

Wake th' harmonious voice and string,
Love and Hymen's triumph sing,
Sounds with secret charms combining,
In melodious union joining,
Best the wondrous joys can tell,
That in hearts united dwell.

RECITATIVE

First Voice.—To young Victoria's happy fame
Well may the Arts a trophy raise,
Music grows sweeter in her praise,
And, own'd by her, with rapture speaks her name.
To touch the brave Cowdenio's heart,
The Graces all in her conspire;
Love arms her with his surest dart,
Apollo with his lyre.

AIR

The list'ning Muses all around her
Think 'tis Phœbus' strain they hear;
And Cupid, drawing near to wound her,
Drops his bow, and stands to hear.

RECITATIVE

Second Voice. While crowds of rivals with despair
Silent admire, or vainly court the Fair,
Behold the happy conquest of her eyes,
A Hero is the glorious prize!
In courts, in camps, thro' distant realms renown'd,
Cowdenio comes!—Victoria, see,
He comes with British honour crown'd,
Love leads his eager steps to thee.

AIR

In tender sighs he silence breaks,
The Fair his flame approves,
Consenting blushes warm her cheeks,
She smiles, she yields, she loves.

RECITATIVE

First Voice.—Now Hymen at the altar stands,
And while he joins their faithful hands,
Behold! by ardent vows brought down,
Immortal Concord, heavenly bright,
Array'd in robes of purest light,
Descends, th' auspicious rites to crown.

Her golden harp the goddess brings;
Its magic sound
Commands a sudden silence all around,
And strains prophetic thus attune the strings.

DUETTO

First Voice.— The Swain his Nymph possessing,
Second Voice.— The Nymph her swain caressing,
First and Second—Shall still improve the blessing,
For ever kind and true.
Both.— While rolling years are flying,
Love, Hymen's lamp supplying,
With fuel never dying,
Shall still the flame renew.

To so great a master as yourself I have no need to suggest that the peculiar tone of the composition demands sprightliness, occasionally checked by tenderness, as in the second air,—

She smiles,—she yields,—she loves.

Again, you need not be told that each fifth line of the two first recitatives requires a crescendo.

And your exquisite taste will prevent your falling into the error of Purcell, who at a passage similar to *that* in my first air,

Drops his bow, and stands to hear,

directed the first violin thus :—

Here the first violin must drop his *bow*.

But, besides the absurdity of disarming his principal performer of so necessary an adjunct to his instrument, in such an emphatic part of the composition too, which must have had a droll effect at the time, all such minutiæ of adaptation are at this time of day very properly exploded, and Jackson of Exeter very fairly ranks them under the head of puns.

Should you succeed in the setting of it, we propose having it performed (we have one very tolerable second voice here, and Mr. Holmes, I dare say, would supply the minor parts) at the Greyhound. But it must be a secret to the young couple till we can get the band in readiness.

Believe me, dear Novello,
Yours truly,
C. LAMB.

Enfield, 6 Nov., '28.

NOTE

[Mrs. Cowden Clarke remarks in her notes on this letter that the references to Purcell and to Jackson of Exeter are inventions. For Mr. Holmes see note on page 661.

Here should come a letter from Lamb to Laman Blanchard, dated Enfield, November 9, 1828, not available for this edition, thanking him for a book and dedication. Samuel Laman Blanchard (1804-1845), afterwards known as a journalist, had just published, through Harrison Ainsworth, a little volume entitled *Lyric Offerings*, which was dedicated to Lamb. After Lamb's death Blanchard contributed to the *New Monthly Magazine* some additional Popular Fallacies.]

LETTER 443

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS HOOD

Late autumn, 1828.
Enfield.

DEAR Lamb—You are an impudent varlet; but I will keep your secret. We dine at Ayrton's on Thursday, and shall try to find Sarah and her two spare beds for that night only. Miss M. and her tragedy may be dished: so may *not* you and your rib. Health attend you.

Yours, T. HOOD, ESQ.

Miss Bridget Hood sends love.

NOTE

[In *The Gem*, 1829, in addition to his poem, "On an Infant Dying as Soon as Born," Lamb was credited with the following piece of prose, entitled "A Widow," which was really the work of Hood (see Letter 438):—

A WIDOW

Hath always been a mark for mockery:—a standing butt for wit to level at. Jest after jest hath been huddled upon her close cap, and stuck, like burrs, upon her weeds. Her sables are a perpetual "Black Joke."

Satirists—prose and verse—have made merry with her bereavements. She is a stock character on the stage. Farce bottleth up her crocodile tears, or labelleth her empty lachrymatories. Comedy mocketh her precocious flirtations—Tragedy even girdeth at her frailty, and twitteth her with "the funeral baked meats coldly furnishing forth the marriage tables."

I confess when I called the other day on my kinswoman G.—then in the second week of her widowhood—and saw her sitting, her young boy by her side, in her recent sables, I felt unable to reconcile her estate with any risible associations. The Lady with a skeleton moiety—in the old print, in Bowles' old shop window—seemed but a type of her condition. Her husband,—a whole hemisphere in love's world—was deficient. One complete side—her left—was death-stricken. It was a matrimonial paralysis, unprovocative of laughter. I could as soon have tittered at one of those melancholy objects that drag their poor dead-alive bodies about the streets.

It seems difficult to account for the popular prejudice against lone women. There is a majority, I trust, of such honest, decorous mourners as my kinswoman:

yet are Widows, like the Hebrew, a proverb and a byeword amongst nations. From the first putting on of the sooty garments, they become a stock joke—chimney-sweep or blackamoor is not surer—by mere virtue of their nigritude.

Are the wanton amatory glances of a few pairs of graceless eyes, twinkling through their cunning waters, to reflect so evil a light on a whole community? Verily the sad benighted orbs of that noble relict—the Lady Rachel Russell—blinded through unserene drops for her dead Lord,—might atone for such oglings!

Are the traditional freaks of a Dame of Ephesus, or a Wife of Bath, or a Queen of Denmark, to cast so broad a shadow over a whole sisterhood. There must be, methinks, some more general infirmity—common, probably, to all Eve-kind—to justify so sweeping a stigma.

Does the satiric spirit, perhaps, institute splenetic comparisons between the lofty poetical pretensions of posthumous tenderness and their fulfilment? The sentiments of Love especially affect a high heroical pitch, of which the human performance can present, at best, but a burlesque parody. A widow, that hath lived only for her husband, should die with him. She is flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone; and it is not seemly for a mere rib to be his survivor. The prose of her practice accords not with the poetry of her professions. She hath done with the world,—and you meet her in Regent Street. Earth hath now nothing left for her—but she swears and administers. She cannot survive him—and invests in the *Long* Annuities.

The romantic fancy resents, and the satiric spirit records, these discrepancies. By the conjugal theory itself there ought to be no Widows; and, accordingly, a class, that by our milder manners is merely ridiculed, on the ruder banks of the Ganges is literally *roasted*. C. LAMB.

"Miss M. and her tragedy." I fancy Miss M. would be Miss Mitford, and her tragedy "Rienzi," produced at Drury Lane October 9, 1828. It was a success. Hood's rib would probably be the play I have not identified. See Letter 440.

Here, a little out of its order, might come a letter from Lamb to Hood, December 17, 1828, which is facsimiled in a privately-printed American bibliography of Lamb, the owner of which declines to let me include it with the correspondence. In it Lamb expresses regret, not so much that Hood had signed "The Widow" with Lamb's name, but that an unfortunately ambiguous jest, pointed out to him by certain friends, had crept into it. He asks that the subject may never be referred to again.]

LETTER 444

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[No date. Dec., 1828.]

DEAR M.,—As I see no blood-marks on the Green Lanes Road, I conclude you got in safe skins home. Have you thought of inquiring Miss Wilson's change of abode? Of the 2 copies of my drama I want one sent to Wordsworth, together with a complete copy of Hone's "Table Book," for which I shall be your debtor till we meet. Perhaps Longman will take charge of this parcel.

The other is for Coleridge at Mr. Gilman's, Grove, Highgate, which may be sent, or, if you have a curiosity to see him you will make an errand with it to him, & tell him we mean very soon to come & see him, if the Gilmans can give or get us a bed. I am ashamed to be so troublesome. Pray let Hood see the "Ecclectic Review"—a rogue! The 2d parts of the Blackwood you may make waste paper of.

Yours truly,

C. L.

NOTE

[I do not identify Miss Wilson. Lamb's drama was "A Wife's Trial" in *Blackwood* for December, 1828. The same number of the *Eclectic Review* referred to Hood's parody of Lamb, "The Widow," as profaning Leslie's picture of the widow by its "heartless ribaldry." By the 2d parts of *Blackwood* Lamb referred, I imagine, to the pages on which his play was not printed.]

LETTER 445

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. December 5, 1828.]

DEAR B. B.—I am ashamed to receive so many nice Books from you, and to have none to send you in return; You are always sending me some fruits or wholesome potherbs, and mine is the garden of the Sluggard, nothing but weeds or scarce they. Nevertheless if I knew how to transmit it, I would send you Blackwood's of this month, which contains a little Drama, to have your opinion of it, and how far I have improved, or otherwise, upon its prototype. Thank you for your kind Sonnet. It does me good to see the Dedication to a Christian Bishop. I am for a Comprehension, as Divines call it, but so as that the Church shall go a good deal more than halfway over to the Silent Meeting house. I have ever said that the Quakers are the only *Professors* of Christianity as I read it in the Evangiles; I say *Professors*—marry, as to practice, with their gaudy hot types and poetical vanities, they are much at one with the sinful. Martin's frontispiece is a very fine thing, let C. L. say what he please to the contrary. Of the Poems, I like them as a volume better than any one of the preceding; particularly, Power and Gentleness; The Present; Lady Russell—with the exception that I do not like the noble act of Curtius, true or false, one of the grand foundations of old Roman patriotism, to be sacrificed to Lady R.'s taking notes on her husband's trial.

If a thing is good, why invidiously bring it into light with something better? There are too few heroic things in this world to admit of our marshalling them in anxious etiquettes of precedence. Would you make a poem on the Story of Ruth (pretty Story!) and then say, Aye, but how much better is the story of Joseph and his Brethren! To go on, the Stanzas to "Chalon" want the *name* of Clarkson in the body of them; it is left to inference. The Battle of Gibeon is spirited again—but you sacrifice it in last stanza to the Song at Bethlehem. Is it quite orthodox to do so. The first was good, you suppose, for that dispensation. Why set the word against the word? It puzzles a weak Christian. So Watts's Psalms are an implied censure on David's. But as long as the Bible is supposed to be an equally divine Emanation with the Testament, so long it will stagger weaklings to have them set in opposition. Godiva is delicately touch'd. I have always thought it a beautiful story characteristic of old English times. But I could not help amusing myself with the thought—if Martin had chosen this subject for a frontispiece, there would have been in some dark corner a white Lady, white as the Walker on the waves—riding upon some mystical quadruped—and high above would have risen "tower above tower a massy structure high" the Tenterden steeples of Coventry, till the poor Cross would scarce have known itself among the clouds, and far above them all, the distant Clint hills peering over chimney pots, piled up, Ossa-on-Olympus fashion, till the admiring Spectator (admirer of a noble deed) might have gone look for the Lady, as you must hunt for the other in the Lobster. But M. should be made Royal Architect. What palaces he would pile—but then what parliamentary grants to make them good! ne'ertheless I like the frontispiece. The Elephant is pleasant; and I am glad you are getting into a wider scope of subjects. There may be too much, not religion, but too many *good words* into a book, till it becomes, as Sh. says of religion, a rhapsody of words. I will just name that you have brought in the Song to the Shepherds in four or five if not six places. Now this is not good economy. The Enoch is fine; and here I can sacrifice Elijah to it, because 'tis illustrative only, and not disparaging of the latter prophet's departure. I like this best in the Book. Lastly, I much like the Heron, 'tis exquisite: know you Lord Thurlow's Sonnet to a Bird of that sort on Lacken water? If not, 'tis indispensable I send it you, with my Blackwood, if you tell me how best to send them. Fludyer is pleasant. You are getting gay and Hood-ish. What is the Enigma? money—if not, I fairly confess I am foiled—and sphynx must [*here are words crossed through*] 4 times I've tried to write eat—eat me—and the blotting pen turns it into cat me. And now I will take my leave with saying I esteem thy verses, like thy present, honour thy frontis-

picer, and right-reverence thy Patron and Dedicatee, and am, dear B. B.

Yours heartily, C. L.

Our joint kindest Loves to A. K. and your Daughter.

NOTE

[Barton's new book was *A New Year's Eve and other Poems*, 1828, dedicated to Charles Richard Sumner, Bishop of Winchester. This volume contains Barton's "Fireside Quatrains to Charles Lamb" (quoted in Vol. V., page 308) and also the following "Sonnet to a Nameless Friend," whom I take to be Lamb :—

SONNET TO A NAMELESS FRIEND

In each successive tome that bears *my* name
  Hast thou, though veiled *thy own* from public eyes,
  Won from my muse that willing sacrifice
Which worth and talents such as thine should claim:
And I should close my minstrel task with shame,
  Could I forget the indissoluble ties
  Which every grateful thought of thee supplies
To one who deems thy friendship more than fame.
Accept then, thus imperfectly, once more,
  The homage of thy poet and thy friend;
  And should thy partial praise my lays commend,
Versed as thou art in all the gentle lore
Of English poesy's exhaustless store,
  Whom I most love they never can offend.

Martin's frontispiece represented Christ walking on the water. Lamb recalls his remarks on page 731 about this painter, who though he never became Royal Architect was the originator of the present Thames Embankment. Macaulay, in his essay on Southey's edition of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, in the *Edinburgh* for December, 1831, makes some very similar remarks about Martin and the way in which he would probably paint Lear.

In the poem "Lady Rachel Russell; or, A Roman Hero and an English Heroine Compared," Barton compared the act of Curtius, who leaped into the gulf in the Forum, with Lady Russell standing beside her lord.

Chalon was the painter of a portrait of Thomas Clarkson.

The "Battle of Gibeon" is a poem inspired by Martin's picture of Joshua (see page 731); the last stanza runs thus :—

Made known by marvels awfully sublime!
  Yet far more glorious in the Christian's sight
Than these stern terrors of the olden time,
  The gentler splendours of that peaceful night,

When opening clouds displayed, in vision bright,
The heavenly host to Bethlehem's shepherd train,
Shedding around them more than cloudless light!
"Glory to God on high!" their opening strain,
Its chorus, "Peace on Earth!" its theme Messiah's reign!

"Tower above tower . . ." I have not found this.

"In the Lobster." Referring to that part of a lobster which is called Eve.

"The Elephant." Some mildly humorous verses "To an Elephant."

"As Sh. says of religion"—Shakespeare, I assume, in "Hamlet," III., 4, 47, 48:—

And sweet Religion makes
A rhapsody of words.

I quote in the Appendix, page 957, the poem which Lamb liked best.

Barton had written a poem called "Syr Heron." This is Lord Thurlow's sonnet, of which Lamb was very fond. He quoted it in a note to his *Elia* essay on the sonnets of Sidney in the *London Magazine*, and copied it into his album:—

TO A BIRD, THAT HAUNTED THE WATERS OF LACKEN, IN THE WINTER

O melancholy Bird, a winter's day,
Thou standest by the margin of the pool,
And, taught by God, dost thy whole being school
To Patience, which all evil can allay.
God has appointed thee the fish thy prey;
And giv'n thyself a lesson to the fool
Unthrifty, to submit to moral rule,
And his unthinking course by thee to weigh.
There need not schools, nor the professor's chair,
Though these be good, true wisdom to impart:
He, who has not enough, for these, to spare,
Of time, or gold, may yet amend his heart,
And teach his soul, by brooks, and rivers fair:
Nature is always wise in every part.

"Fludyer" was a poem to Sir Charles Fludyer on the devastation effected on his marine villa at Felixstowe by the encroachments of the sea. The answer to the enigma, Mrs. FitzGerald (Lucy Barton) told Canon Ainger, was not money but an auctioneer's hammer.

Here should come a letter from Lamb to Louisa Holcroft, dated December 5, 1828, not available for this edition. Louisa Holcroft was a daughter of Thomas Holcroft, Lamb's friend, whose widow married Kenney. A good letter with some excellent nonsense about measles in it.]

LETTER 446

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE

[December, 1828.]

MY dear three C.'s—The way from Southgate to Colney Hatch thro' the unfrequentedest Blackberry paths that ever concealed their coy bunches from a truant Citizen, we have accidentally fallen upon—the giant Tree by Cheshunt we have missed, but keep your chart to go by, unless you will be our conduct—at present I am disabled from further flights than just to skirt round Clay Hill, with a peep at the fine back woods, by strained tendons, got by skipping a skipping-rope at 53—heu mihi non sum qualis. But do you know, now you come to talk of walks, a ramble of four hours or so—there and back—to the willow and lavender plantations at the south corner of Northaw Church by a well dedicated to Saint Claridge, with the clumps of finest moss rising hillock fashion, which I counted to the number of two hundred and sixty, and are called "Claridge's covers"—the tradition being that that saint entertained so many angels or hermits there, upon occasion of blessing the waters? The legends have set down the fruits spread upon that occasion, and in the Black Book of St. Albans some are named which are not supposed to have been introduced into this island till a century later. But waiving the miracle, a sweeter spot is not in ten counties round; you are knee deep in clover, that is to say, if you are not above a middling man's height; from this paradise, making a day of it, you go to see the ruins of an old convent at March Hall, where some of the painted glass is yet whole and fresh.

If you do not know this, you do not know the capabilities of this country, you may be said to be a stranger to Enfield. I found it out one morning in October, and so delighted was I that I did not get home before dark, well a-paid.

I shall long to show you the clump meadows, as they are called; we might do that, without reaching March Hall. When the days are longer, we might take both, and come home by Forest Cross, so skirt over Pennington and the cheerful little village of Churchley to Forty Hill.

But these are dreams till summer; meanwhile we should be most glad to see you for a lesser excursion—say, Sunday next, you and *another*, or if more, best on a weekday with a notice, but o' Sundays, as far as a leg of mutton goes, most welcome. We can squeeze out a bed. Edmonton coaches run every hour, and my pen has run out its quarter. Heartily farewell.

NOTE

[Much of the "Lamb country" touched upon in this letter is now built on. On the opposite page I give a map, kindly drawn for me by Miss M. C. G. Jackson, of Lamb's favourite walking region.

"The giant Tree by Cheshunt" is Goff's Oak.

"*Heu mihi non sum qualis*"—"Woe is me! I am not what I was."

"The Black Book of St. Albans." The Black Books exposed abuses in the church.

"Well a-paid." See Shakespeare's "Lucrece," line 914.]

LETTER 447

CHARLES LAMB TO T. N. TALFOURD

[No date. End of 1828.]

DEAR Talfourd,—You could not have told me of a more friendly thing than you have been doing. I am proud of my namesake. I shall take care never to do any dirty action, pick pockets, or anyhow get myself hanged, for fear of reflecting ignominy upon your young Chrisom. I have now a motive to be good. I shall not *omnis moriar*;—my name borne down the black gulf of oblivion.

I shall survive in eleven letters, five more than Cæsar. Possibly I shall come to be knighted, or more! Sir C. L. Talfourd, Bart.!

Yet hath it an authorish twang with it, which will wear out my name for poetry. Give him a smile from me till I see him. If you do not drop down before, some day in the *week after next* I will come and take one night's lodging with you, if convenient, before you go hence. You shall name it. We are in town to-morrow *speciali gratia*, but by no arrangement can get up near you.

Believe us both, with greatest regards, yours and Mrs. Talfourd's.

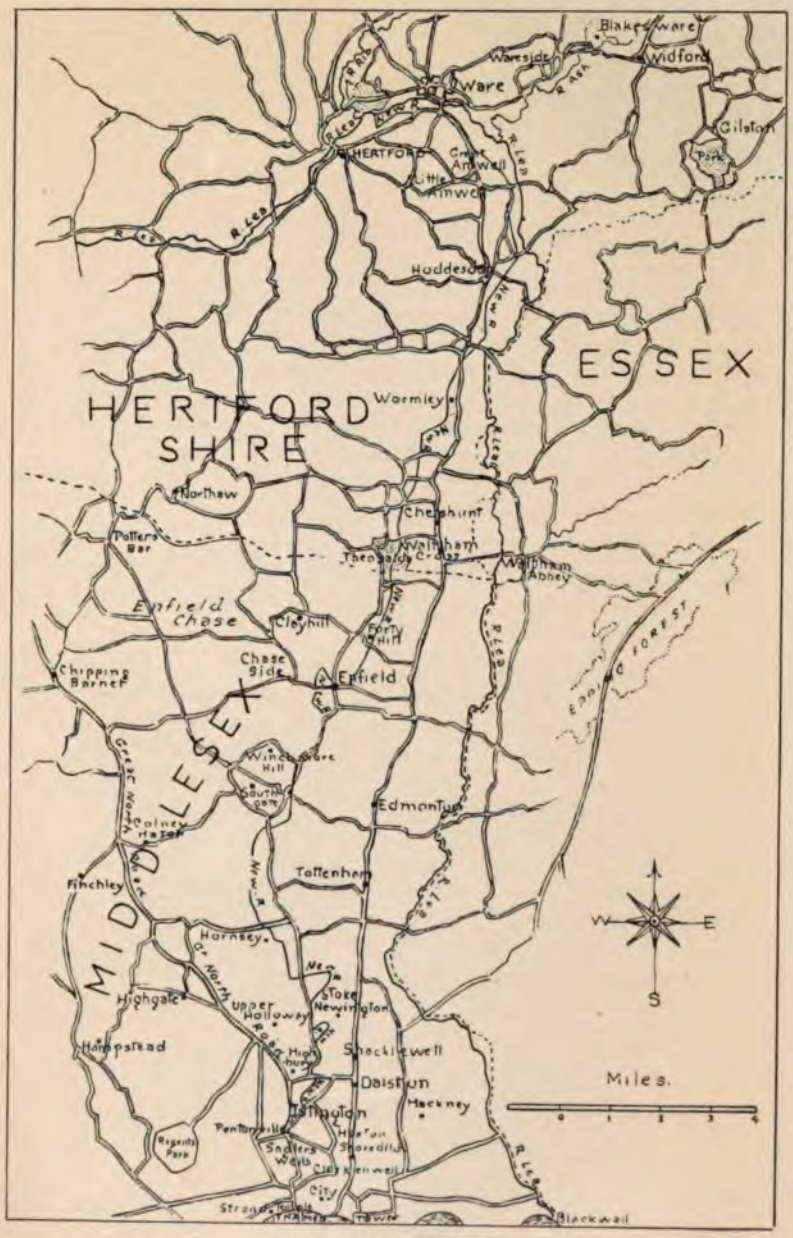
CHARLES LAMB-PHILO-TALFOURD.

I come as near it as I can.

NOTE

[This may be incorrectly dated, but I place it here because in that to Hood of December 17, summarised above, Lamb speaks of his godson at Brighton.

Talfourd (who himself dates this letter 1829) had named his latest child Charles Lamb Talfourd. The boy lived only until 1835. I quote in the Appendix the verses which Talfourd wrote on his death (see page 958). Another of Lamb's name children,



THE LAMB COUNTRY

FROM A MAP DRAWN BY MISS M. C. G. JACKSON

Charles Lamb Kenney, grew to man's estate and became a ready writer.

"I shall not *omnis moriar*" (see Horace, *Odes*, III., xxx., 6)—"I shall not wholly die."]

LETTER 448

CHARLES LAMB TO GEORGE DYER

[No date. ? January, 1829.]

DEAR Dyer, My very good friend, and Charles Clarke's father in law, Vincent Novello, wishes to shake hands with you. Make him play you a tune. He is a damn'd fine musician, and what is better, a good man and true. He will tell you how glad we should be to have Mrs. Dyer and you here for a few days. Our young friend, Miss Isola, has been here holydaymaking, but leaves us tomorrow.

Yours Ever CH. LAMB.

Enfield.

[*Added in a feminine hand:*] Emma's love to Mr. and Mrs. Dyer.

NOTE

[The date of this note is pure conjecture on my part, but is unimportant. Novello had become Charles Clarke's father-in-law in 1828, and Emma Isola, who was now teaching the children of a clergyman named Williams, at Fornham, in Suffolk, spent her Christmas holidays with the Lambs that year.

Here, perhaps, should come an undated letter from Lamb to Louisa Martin, printed by Mr. Hazlitt in Bohn's edition, not available for the present volume. Lamb begins "Dear Monkey," and refers to his "niece," Mrs. Dowden, and some business which she requires him to transact, Mrs. Dowden being Mrs. John Lamb's daughter-in-law (see page 569). Lamb describes himself as "a sick cat that loves to be alone on housetops or at cellar bottoms."]

LETTER 449

CHARLES LAMB TO B. W. PROCTER

[19th Jan., 1829.]

MY dear Procter,—I am ashamed to have not taken the drift of your pleasant letter, which I find to have been pure invention. But jokes are not suspected in Bœotian Enfield. We are

plain people; and our talk is of corn, and cattle, and Waltham markets. Besides, I was a little out of sorts when I received it. The fact is, I am involved in a case which has fretted me to death; and I have no reliance, except on you, to extricate me. I am sure you will give me your best legal advice, having no professional friend besides but Robinson and Talfourd, with neither of whom at present I am on the best terms. My brother's widow left a will, made during the lifetime of my brother, in which I am named sole executor, by which she bequeaths forty acres of arable property, which it seems she held under Covert Baron, unknown to my brother, to the heirs of the body of Elizabeth Dowden, her married daughter by a first husband, in fee-simple, recoverable by fine—*invested* property, mind; for there is the difficulty—subject to leet and quit-rent; in short, worded in the most guarded terms, to shut out the property from Isaac Dowden, the husband. Intelligence has just come of the death of this person in India, where he made a will, entailing this property (which seem'd entangled enough already) to the heirs of his body, that should not be born of his wife; for it seems by the law in India, natural children can recover. They have put the cause into Exchequer process, here removed by Certiorari from the native Courts; and the question is, whether I should, as executor, try the cause here, or again re-remove it to the Supreme Sessions at Bangalore? (which I understand I can, or plead a hearing before the Privy Council here). As it involves all the little property of Elizabeth Dowden, I am anxious to take the fittest steps, and what may be least expensive. Pray assist me, for the case is so embarrassed, that it deprives me of sleep and appetite. M. Burney thinks there is a case like it in Chapt. 170, sect. 5, in Fearne's Contingent Remainders. Pray read it over with him dispassionately, and let me have the result. The complexity lies in the questionable power of the husband to alienate. . . .

I had another favour to beg, which is the beggarliest of beggings.

A few lines of verse for a young friend's Album (six will be enough). M. Burney will tell you who she is I want 'em for. A girl of gold. Six lines—make 'em eight—signed Barry C——. They need not be very good, as I chiefly want 'em as a foil to mine. But I shall be seriously obliged by any refuse scrap. We are in the last ages of the world, when St. Paul prophesied that women should be "headstrong, lovers of their own wills, having Albums." I fled hither to escape the Albumean persecution, and had not been in my new house twenty-four hours, when the daughter of the next house came in with a friend's Album to beg a contribution, and the following day intimated she had one of her own. Two more have sprung up since. If I take the wings of the morning and fly unto the uttermost parts of the earth, there will Albums be. New

Holland has Albums. But the age is to be complied with. M. B. will tell you the sort of girl I request the ten lines for. Somewhat of a pensive cast, what you admire. The lines may come before the Law question, as that can not be determined before Hilary Term, and I wish your deliberate judgment on that. The other may be flimsy and superficial. And if you have not burnt your returned letter, pray re-send it me, as a monumental token of my stupidity. 'Twas a little unthinking of you to touch upon a sore subject. Why, by dabbling in those accursed Albums, I have become a byword of infamy all over the kingdom. I have sicken'd decent women for asking me to write in Albums. There be "dark jests" abroad, Master Cornwall; and some riddles may live to be clear'd up. And 'tis not every saddle is put on the right steed; and forgeries and false Gospels are not peculiar to the Age following the Apostles. And some tubs don't stand on their right bottoms. Which is all I wish to say in these ticklish Times—and so your Servant,

CHS. LAMB.

NOTE

[We do not know the nature of the "bite" that Procter had put upon Lamb; but Lamb quickly retaliated with the first paragraph of this letter, which is mainly invention. In his *Old Acquaintance* Mr. Fields wrote: "He [Procter] told me that the law question raised in this epistle was a sheer fabrication of Lamb's, gotten up by him to puzzle his young correspondent, the conveyancer. The coolness referred to between himself and Robinson and Talfourd, Procter said, was also a fiction invented by Lamb to carry out his legal mystification."

At the end of the first paragraph came some words in another hand: "*in usum* enfeoffments whereof he was only collaterally seized, &c.," beneath which Lamb wrote: "The above is some of M. Burney's memoranda which he has left me, and you may cut out and give him."

Procter's verses for Emma Isola's album I have not seen, but Canon Ainger says that they refer to "Isola Bella, whom all poets love," the island in Lago di Maggiore (see Letter 453). See also Appendix II., page 977.

"When St. Paul prophesied." Was Lamb thinking of the opening verses of chapter iii. of the second epistle to Timothy?

"If I take the wings of the morning." See Psalms cxxxix. 9. Compare with this passage that in Letter 425, on page 766.]

LETTER 450

CHARLES LAMB TO B. W. PROCTER

Jan. 22nd, 1829.

DON'T trouble yourself about the verses. Take 'em coolly as they come. Any day between this and Midsummer will do. Ten lines the extreme. There is no mystery in my incognita. She has often seen you, though you may not have observed a silent brown girl, who for the last twelve years has run wild about our house in her Christmas holidays. She is Italian by name and extraction. Ten lines about the blue sky of her country will do, as it's her foible to be proud of it. But they must not be over courtly or Lady-fied as she is with a Lady who says to her "go and she goeth; come and she cometh". Item, I have made her a tolerable Latinist. The verses should be moral too, as for a Clergyman's family. She is called Emma Isola. I approve heartily of your turning your four vols. into a lesser compass. 'Twill Sybillise the gold left. I shall, I think, be in town in a few weeks, when I will assuredly see you. I will put in here loves to Mrs. Procter and the Anti-Capulets, because Mary tells me I omitted them in my last. I like to see my friends here. I have put my lawsuit into the hands of an Enfield practitioner—a plain man, who seems perfectly to understand it, and gives me hopes of a favourable result.

Rumour tells us that Miss Holcroft is married; though the varlet has not had the grace to make any communication to us on the subject. Who is Badman, or Bed'em? Have I seen him at Montacute's? I hear he is a great chymist. I am sometimes chymical myself. A thought strikes me with horror. Pray heaven he may not have done it for the sake of trying chymical experiments upon her,—young female subjects are so scarce! Louisa would make a capital shot. An't you glad about Burke's case? We may set off the Scotch murders against the Scotch novels—Hare, the Great Un-hanged.

Martin Burney is richly worth your knowing. He is on the top scale of my friendship ladder, on which an angel or two is still climbing, and some, alas! descending. I am out of the literary world at present. Pray, is there anything new from the admired pen of the author of the *Pleasures of Hope?* Has Mrs. He-mans (double masculine) done anything pretty lately? Why sleeps the lyre of Hervey, and of Alaric Watts? Is the muse of L. E. L. silent? Did you see a sonnet of mine in Blackwood's last? Curious con-

struction! *Elaborata facilitas!* And now I'll tell. 'Twas written for the "Gem;" but the editors declined it, on the plea that it would *shock all mothers;* so they published "The Widow" instead. I am born out of time. I have no conjecture about what the present world calls delicacy. I thought "Rosamund Gray" was a pretty modest thing. Hessey assures me that the world would not bear it. I have lived to grow into an indecent character. When my sonnet was rejected, I exclaimed, "Damn the age; I will write for Antiquity!"

Erratum in sonnet:—Last line but something, for *tender*, read *tend*. The Scotch do not know our law terms; but I find some remains of honest, plain, old writing lurking there still. They were not so mealy-mouthed as to refuse my verses. Maybe, 'tis their oatmeal.

Blackwood sent me £20 for the drama. Somebody cheated me out of it next day; and my new pair of breeches, just sent home, cracking at first putting on, I exclaimed, in my wrath, "All tailors are cheats, and all men are tailors." Then I was better. [*Rest lost.*]

Note

["Your four vols." Procter's poetical works, in three volumes, were published in 1822. Since then he had issued *The Flood of Thessaly*, 1823. He was perhaps meditating a new one-volume selection.

"Anti-Capulets"—the Basil Montagus (Montacutes).

"Badman." Louisa Holcroft married Carlyle's friend Badams, a manufacturer and scientific experimentalist of Birmingham, with whom the philosopher spent some weeks in 1827 in attempting a cure for dyspepsia (see the *Early Recollections*).

"Burke's case." William Burke and William Hare, the body-snatchers and murderers of Edinburgh, who killed persons to sell their corpses to Knox's school of anatomy. Burke was hanged a week later than this letter, on January 28. Hare turned King's evidence and disappeared. A "shot" was a subject in these men's vocabulary. The author of the Waverley novels—the Great Unknown—had, of course, become known long before this.

"M. B."—Martin Burney. In 1818 Lamb had dedicated the prose volume of his *Works* to Burney, in a sonnet ending with the lines:—

> Free from self-seeking, envy, low design,
> I have not found a whiter soul than thine.

Hervey was Thomas Kibble Hervey (1799-1859), a great album poet.

"A sonnet of mine in Blackwood"—in the number for January, 1829 (see page 799).

"Hessey"—of the firm of Taylor & Hessey, the late publishers of the *London Magazine*.

Another letter from Lamb to Procter, repeating the request for verses, was referred to by Canon Ainger in the preface to his edition of the correspondence. Canon Ainger printed a delightful passage, which I am not at liberty to quote. It was disappointing not to find it among the letters proper in his new edition.]

LETTER 451

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

Jan. 28, 1829.

DEAR Allsop—Old Star is setting. Take him and cut him into Little Stars. Nevertheless the extinction of the greater light is not by the lesser light (Stella, or Mrs. Star) apprehended so nigh, but that she will be thankful if you can let young Scintillation (Master Star) twinkle down by the coach on Sunday, to catch the last glimmer of the decaying parental light. No news is good news; so we conclude Mrs. A. and little a are doing well. Our kindest loves, C. L.

NOTE

[I cannot explain the mystery of these Stars.]

LETTER 452

CHARLES LAMB TO B. W. PROCTER

[? Jan. 29th, 1829.]

WHEN Miss Ouldcroft (who is now Mrs. Beddome, and Bed—dom'd to her!) was at Enfield, which she was in summertime, and owed her health to its sun and genial influences, she wisited (with young lady-like impertinence) a poor man's cottage that had a pretty baby (O the yearnling!), and gave it fine caps and sweetmeats. On a day, broke into the parlour our two maids uproarious. "O ma'am, who do you think Miss Ouldcroft (they pronounce it Holcroft) has been working a cap for?" "A child," answered Mary, in true Shandean female simplicity. "It's the man's child as was taken up for sheep-stealing." Miss Ouldcroft was staggered, and would have cut the connection; but by main force I made her go

and take her leave of her protégée (which I only spell with a g because I can't make a pretty j). I thought, if she went no more, the Abactor or Abactor's wife (vide Ainsworth) would suppose she had heard something; and I have delicacy for a sheep-stealer. The overseers actually overhauled a mutton-pie at the baker's (his first, last, and only hope of mutton-pie), which he never came to eat, and thence inferred his guilt. *Per occasionem cujus* I framed the sonnet; observe its elaborate construction. I was four days about it.

THE GYPSY'S MALISON

Suck, baby, suck, Mother's love grows by giving,
  Drain the sweet founts that only thrive by wasting;
Black Manhood comes, when riotous guilty living
  Hands thee the cup that shall be death in tasting.
Kiss, baby, kiss, Mother's lips shine by kisses,
  Choke the warm breath that else would fall in blessings;
Black Manhood comes, when turbulent guilty blisses
  Tend thee the kiss that poisons 'mid caressings.
Hang, baby, hang, mother's love loves such forces,
  Choke the fond neck that bends still to thy clinging;
Black Manhood comes, when violent lawless courses
  Leave thee a spectacle in rude air swinging.
    So sang a wither'd Sibyl energetical,
    And bann'd the ungiving door with lips prophetical.

Barry, study that sonnet. It is curiously and perversely elaborate. 'Tis a choking subject, and therefore the reader is directed to the structure of it. See you? and was this a fourteener to be rejected by a trumpery annual? forsooth, 'twould shock all mothers; and may all mothers, who would so be shocked, bed dom'd! as if mothers were such sort of logicians as to infer the future hanging of *their* child from the theoretical hangibility (or capacity of being hanged, if the judge pleases) of every infant born with a neck on. Oh B. C., my whole heart is faint, and my whole head is sick (how is it?) at this damned, canting, unmasculine unbxwdy (I had almost said) age! Don't show this to your child's mother or I shall be Orpheusized, scattered into Hebras. Damn the King, lords, commons, and *specially* (as I said on Muswell Hill on a Sunday when I could get no beer a quarter before one) all Bishops, Priests and Curates. Vale.

NOTE

["Ainsworth." Referring to Robert Ainsworth's *Thesaurus*, 1736. *Abactor* I do not find; but *abactus* is there—to drive away by force.

"The Gypsy's Malison." This is the sonnet in *Blackwood* for January, 1829.]

LETTER 453

(*FRAGMENT*)

CHARLES LAMB TO B. W. PROCTER

[No date. Early 1829.]

THE comings in of an incipient conveyancer are not adequate to the receipt of three twopenny post non-paids in a week. Therefore, after this, I condemn my stub to long and deep silence, or shall awaken it to write to lords. Lest those raptures in this honeymoon of my correspondence, which you avow for the gentle person of my Nuncio, after passing through certain natural grades, as Love, Love and Water, Love with the chill off, then subsiding to that point which the heroic suitor of his wedded dame, the noble-spirited Lord Randolph in the play, declares to be the ambition of his passion, a reciprocation of "complacent kindness,"—should suddenly plump down (scarce staying to bait at the mid point of indifference, so hungry it is for distaste) to a loathing and blank aversion, to the rendering probable such counter expressions as this,—"Damn that infernal twopenny postman" (words which make the not yet glutted inamorato "lift up his hands and wonder who can use them.") While, then, you are not ruined, let me assure thee, O thou above the painter, and next only under Giraldus Cambrensis, the most immortal and worthy to be immortal Barry, thy most ingenious and golden cadences do take my fancy mightily. They are at this identical moment under the snip and the paste of the fairest hands (bating chilblains) in Cambridge, soon to be transplanted to Suffolk, to the envy of half of the young ladies in Bury. But tell me, and tell me truly, gentle Swain, is that Isola Bella a true spot in geographical denomination, or a floating Delos in thy brain? Lurks that fair island in verity in the bosom of Lake Maggiore, or some other with less poetic name, which thou hast Cornwallized for the occasion? And what if Maggiore itself be but a coinage of adaptation? Of this pray resolve me immediately, for my albumess will be catechised on this subject; and how can I prompt her? Lake Leman, I know, and Lemon Lake (in a punch bowl) I have swum in, though those lymphs be long since dry. But Maggiore may be in the moon. Unsphinx this riddle for me, for my shelves have no gazetteer. And mayest thou never murder thy father-in-law in the Trivia of Lincoln's Inn New Square Passage, where Searl Street and the Street of Portugal embrace, nor afterwards make absurd proposals to the Widow M. But I know you abhor any such notions. Nevertheless so did O-Edipus (as Admiral Burney used to call him, splitting the diphthong in spite of ignorance) for that matter. C. L.

NOTE

["Lord Randolph"—in Home's "Douglas." See Act I., Scene 1. His lordship remarks:—

> I never asked of thee that ardent love
> Which in the breasts of fancy's children burns.
> Decent affection and complacent kindness
> Were all I wished for; but I wished in vain.

"Lift up his hands . . ." I do not find this.

"Above the painter"—James Barry, R.A.

"Giraldus Cambrensis"—the historian, Giraldus de Barri.

Procter's poem for Emma Isola's album, as we have seen, mentions Isola Bella, the island in Lago de Maggiore. Delos was the floating island which Neptune fixed in order that Latona might rest there and Apollo and Diana be born.

Œdipus, who solved the riddle of the Sphinx, was the murderer of his father. Basil Montagu was Procter's father-in-law. Procter's address was 10 Lincolns Inn, New Square.

At the end of the letter came a passage which for family reasons cannot be printed.]

LETTER 454

CHARLES LAMB TO B. W. PROCTER

February 2, 1829.

FACUNDISSIME Poeta! quanquam istiusmodi epitheta oratoribus potiùs quam poetis attinere facilè scio — tamen, facundissime!

Commoratur nobiscum jamdiu, in agro Enfeldiense, scilicet, leguleius futurus, illustrissimus Martinus Burneius, otium agens, negotia nominalia, et officinam clientum vacuam, paululum fugiens. Orat, implorat te—nempe, Martinus—ut si (quòd Dii faciant) fortè fortunâ, absente ipso, advenerit tardus cliens, eum certiorem feceris per literas hûc missas. Intelligisne? an me Anglicè et barbarice ad te hominem perdoctum scribere oportet?

Si status de franco tenemento datur avo, et in eodem facto si mediate vel immediate datur *hæredibus vel hæredibus corporis dicti avi*, postrema hæc verba sunt Limitationis, non Perquisitionis.

Dixi. CARLAGNULUS.

NOTE

[Mr. Stephen Gwynn has made the following translation for me:—

"Most eloquent Poet: though I know well such epithet befits orators rather than poets—and yet, Most eloquent!

"There has been staying with us this while past at our country seat of Enfield to wit, the future attorney, the illustrious Martin Burney, taking his leisure, flying for a space from his nominal occupations, and his office empty of clients. He—that is, Martin—begs and entreats of you that if (heaven send it so!) by some stroke of fortune, in his absence there should arrive a belated client, you would inform him by letter here. Do you understand? or must I write in barbarous English to a scholar like you?

"If an estate in freehold is given to an ancestor, and if in the same deed directly or indirectly the gift is made to the heir or heirs of the body of the said ancestor, these last words have the force of Limitation not of Purchase.

"I have spoken. CHARLES LAMB."

The last passage was copied probably direct from some law book of Burney's, and is unintelligible except to students of law-Latin.]

LETTER 455

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE

Edmonton, Feb. 2, 1829.

DEAR Cowden,—Your books are as the gushing of streams in a desert. By the way, you have sent no autobiographies. Your letter seems to imply you had. Nor do I want any. Cowden, they are of the books which I give away. What damn'd Unitarian skewer-soul'd things the general biographies turn out. Rank and Talent you shall have when Mrs. May has done with 'em. Mary likes Mrs. Bedinfield much. For me I read nothing but Astrea—it has turn'd my brain—I go about with a switch turn'd up at the end for a crook; and Lambs being too old, the butcher tells me, my cat follows me in a green ribband. Becky and her cousin are getting pastoral dresses, and then we shall all four go about Arcadizing. O cruel Shepherdess! Inconstant yet fair, and more inconstant for being fair! Her gold ringlets fell in a disorder superior to order!

Come and join us.

I am called the Black Shepherd—you shall be Cowden with the Tuft.

Prosaically, we shall be glad to have you both,—or any two of you—drop in by surprise some Saturday night.

This must go off.
Loves to Vittoria. C. L.

NOTE

["Rank and Talent"—a novel by W. P. Scargill, 1829.
"Astrea." Probably the romance by Honoré D'Urfé.
"Cowden with the Tuft." So called from his hair, and from *Riquet with the Tuft*, the fairy tale. We read in the Cowden Clarkes' *Recollections of Writers:* "The latter name ('Cowden with the Tuft') slyly implies the smooth baldness with scant curly hair distinguishing the head of the friend addressed, and which seemed to strike Charles Lamb so forcibly, that one evening, after gazing at it for some time, he suddenly broke forth with the exclamation, ''Gad, Clarke! what whiskers you have behind your head!'"]

LETTER 456

CHARLES LAMB TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

[P.M. February 27, 1829.]

DEAR R.—Expectation was alert on the receit of your strange-shaped present, while yet undisclosed from its fusc envelope. Some said, 'tis a viol da Gamba, others pronounced it a fiddle. I myself hoped it a Liquer case pregnant with Eau de Vie and such odd Nectar. When midwifed into daylight, the gossips were at loss to pronounce upon its species. Most took it for a marrow spoon, an apple scoop, a banker's guinea shovel. At length its true scope appeared, its drift—to save the backbone of my sister stooping to scuttles. A philanthropic intent, borrowed no doubt from some of the Colliers. You save people's backs one way, and break 'em again by loads of obligation. The spectacles are delicate and Vulcanian. No lighter texture than their steel did the cuckoldy blacksmith frame to catch Mrs. Vulcan and the Captain in. For ungalled forehead, as for back unbursten, you have Mary's thanks. Marry, for my own peculium of obligation, 'twas supererogatory. A second part of Pamela was enough in conscience. Two Pamelas in a house is too much without two Mr. B.'s to reward 'em.

Mary, who is handselling her new aerial perspectives upon a pair of old worsted stockings trod out in Cheshunt lanes, sends love.

I, great good liking. Bid us a personal farewell before you see the Vatican.

Chas. Lamb, Enfield.

NOTE

[Crabb Robinson, just starting for Rome, had sent Lamb a copy of *Pamela* under the impression that he had borrowed one.

"Two Mr. B.'s." In Richardson's novel Pamela marries the young Squire B. and reforms him.]

LETTER 457

CHARLES LAMB TO SAMUEL ROGERS

Chase, Enfield: 22nd Mar., 1829.

MY dear Sir,—I have but lately learned, by letter from Mr. Moxon, the death of your brother. For the little I had seen of him, I greatly respected him. I do not even know how recent your loss may have been, and hope that I do not unseasonably present you with a few lines suggested to me this morning by the thought of him. I beg to be most kindly remembered to your remaining brother, and to Miss Rogers.

Your's truly,

CHARLES LAMB.

Rogers, of all the men that I have known
But slightly, who have died, your brother's loss
Touched me most sensibly. There came across
My mind an image of the cordial tone
Of your fraternal meetings, where a guest
I more than once have sate; and grieve to think,
That of that threefold cord one precious link
By Death's rude hand is sever'd from the rest.
Of our old gentry he appear'd a stem;
A magistrate who, while the evil-doer
He kept in terror, could respect the poor,
And not for every trifle harass them—
As some, divine and laic, too oft do.
This man's a private loss and public too.

NOTE

[Daniel Rogers, the banker's elder brother, had just died (see Letter 465).]

LETTER 458

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. March 25, 1829.]

DEAR B. B.—I send you by desire Darley's very poetical poem. You will like, I think, the novel headings of each scene. Scenical directions in verse are novelties. With it I send a few *duplicates*, which are *therefore* no value to me, and may amuse an idle hour. Read "Christmas," 'tis the production of a young author, who reads all your writings. A good word from you about his little book would be as balm to him. It has no pretensions, and makes none. But parts are pretty. In "Field's Appendix" turn to a Poem called the Kangaroo. It is in the best way of our old poets, if I mistake not. I have just come from Town, where I have been to get my bit of quarterly pension. And have brought home, from stalls in Barbican, the old Pilgrim's Progress with the prints—Vanity Fair, &c.—now scarce. Four shillings. Cheap. And also one of whom I have oft heard and had dreams, but never saw in the flesh—that is, in sheepskin—The whole theologic works of—

THOMAS AQUINAS!

My arms aked with lugging it a mile to the stage, but the burden was a pleasure, such as old Anchises was to the shoulders of Æneas —or the Lady to the Lover in old romance, who having to carry her to the top of a high mountain—the price of obtaining her—clamber'd with her to the top, and fell dead with fatigue.

O the glorious old Schoolmen!

There must be something in him. Such great names imply greatness. Who hath seen Michael Angelo's things—of us that never pilgrimaged to Rome—and yet which of us disbelieves his greatness. How I will revel in his cobwebs and subtleties, till my brain spins!

N.B. I have writ in the old Hamlet, offer it to Mitford in my name, if he have not seen it. Tis woefully below our editions of it. But keep it, if you like. (What is M. to me?)

I do not mean this to go for a letter, only to apprize you, that the parcel is booked for you this 25 March 1829 from the Four Swans Bishopsgate.

With both our loves to Lucy and A. K. Yours Ever C. L.

NOTE

["Darley's . . . poem"—*Sylvia; or, The May Queen*, by George Darley.

"Christmas"—a poem by Edward Moxon, dedicated to Lamb.

"Field's Appendix"—*Geographical Memoirs on New South Wales*, edited by Barron Field, with his *First-Fruits of Australian Poetry* (see page 543) as Appendix.

"Anchises . . . Æneas." See the *Æneid*, II., 707-722.

"The old romance." I do not know the story.]

LETTER 459

CHARLES LAMB TO MISS SARAH JAMES

[No date. ? April, 1829.]

WE have just got your letter. I think Mother Reynolds will go on quietly, Mrs. Scrimpshaw having kittened. The name of the late Laureat was Henry James Pye, and when his 1st Birthday Ode came out, which was very poor, somebody being asked his opinion of it, said :—

> And when the Pye was open'd
> The birds began to sing,
> And was not this a dainty dish
> To set before the King!

Pye was brother to old Major Pye, and father to Mrs. Arnold, and uncle to a General Pye, all friends of Miss Kelly. Pye succeeded Thos. Warton, Warton succeeded Wm. Whitehead, Whitehead succeeded Colley Cibber, Cibber succeeded Eusden, Eusden succeeded Thos. Shadwell, Shadwell succeeded Dryden, Dryden succeeded Davenant, Davenant God knows whom. There never was a Rogers a Poet Laureat; there is an old living Poet of that name, a Banker as you know, Author of the "Pleasures of Memory," where Moxon goes to breakfast in a fine house in the green Park, but he was never Laureat. Southey is the present one, and for anything I know or care, Moxon may succeed him. We have a copy of "Xmas" for you, so you may give your own to Mary as soon as you please. We think you need not have exhibited your mountain shyness before M. B. He is neither shy himself, nor patronizes it in others.—So with many thanks, good-bye. Emma comes on Thursday. C. L.

The Poet Laureat, whom Davenant succeeded was Rare 'Ben Jonson,' who I believe was the first regular Laureat with the appointment of £100 a year and a Butt of Sack or Canary—so add that to my little list.—C. L.

NOTE

[Mr. Macdonald dates this letter December 31, 1828, perhaps rightly. I have dated it at a venture April, 1829, because Moxon's *Christmas* was published in March of that year. It is the only letter to Mary Lamb's nurse, Miss James, that exists. Mrs. Reynolds was Lamb's aged pensioner, whom we have met. Pye died in 1813 and was succeeded by Southey. The author of the witticism on his first ode was George Steevens, the critic. The comment gained point from the circumstance that Pye had drawn largely on images from bird life in his verses.]

LETTER 460

CHARLES LAMB TO H. CRABB ROBINSON

[P.M. April ? 1829.]

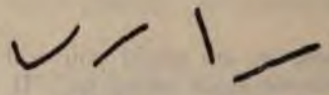
DEAR Robinson, we are afraid you will slip from us from England without again seeing us. It would be charity to come and see me. I have these three days been laid up with strong rheumatic pains, in loins, back, shoulders. I shriek sometimes from the violence of them. I get scarce any sleep, and the consequence is, I am restless, and want to change sides as I lie, and I cannot turn without resting on my hands, and so turning all my body all at once like a log with a lever. While this rainy weather lasts, I have no hope of alleviation. I have tried flannels and embrocation in vain. Just at the hip joint the pangs sometimes are so excruciating, that I cry out. It is as violent as the cramp, and far more continuous. I am ashamed to whine about these complaints to you, who can ill enter into them. But indeed they are sharp. You go about, in rain or fine at all hours without discommodity. I envy you your immunity at a time of life not much removed from my own. But you owe your exemption to temperance, which it is too late for me to pursue. I in my life time have had my good things. Hence my frame is brittle—yours strong as brass. I never knew any ailment you had. You can go out at night in all weathers, sit up all hours. Well, I don't want to moralise. I only wish to say that if you are enclined to a game at Doubly Dumby, I would try and bolster up myself in a chair for a rubber or so. My days are tedious, but less so and less painful than my nights. May you never know the pain and difficulty I have in writing so much. Mary, who is most kind, joins in the wish. C. LAMB.

LETTER 461

CHARLES LAMB TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

[P.M. April 17, 1829.]

I DO confess to mischief. It was the subtlest diabolical piece of malice, heart of man has contrived. I have no more rheumatism than that poker. Never was freer from all pains and aches. Every joint sound, to the tip of the ear from the extremity of the lesser toe. The report of thy torments was blown circuitously here from Bury. I could not resist the jeer. I conceived you writhing, when you should just receive my congratulations. How mad you'd be. Well, it is not in my method to inflict pangs. I leave that to heaven. But in the existing pangs of a friend, I have a share. His disquietude crowns my exemption. I imagine you howling, and pace across the room, shooting out my free arms legs &c.



this way and that way, with an assurance of not kindling a spark of pain from them. I deny that Nature meant us to sympathise with agonies. Those face-contortions, retortions, distortions, have the merriness of antics. Nature meant them for farce—not so pleasant to the actor indeed, but Grimaldi cries when we laugh, and 'tis but one that suffers to make thousands rejoyce.

You say that Shampooing is ineffectual. But *per se* it is good, to show the introv[ol]utions, extravolutions, of which the animal frame is capable. To show what the creature is receptible of, short of dissolution.

You are worst of nights, a'nt you?

Twill be as good as a Sermon to you to lie abed all this night, and meditate the subject of the day. 'Tis Good Friday. How appropriate!

Think when but your little finger pains you, what endured to white-wash you and the rest of us.

Nobody will be the more justified for your endurance. You won't save the soul of a mouse. 'Tis a pure selfish pleasure.

You never was rack'd, was you? I should like an authentic map of those feelings.

You seem to have the flying gout.

You can scarcely scrue a smile out of your face—can you? I sit at immunity, and sneer *ad libitum*.

'Tis now the time for you to make good resolutions. I may go on breaking 'em, for any thing the worse I find myself.

Your Doctor seems to keep you on the long cure. Precipitate healings are never good.

Don't come while you are so bad. I shan't be able to attend to your throes and the dumbee at once.

I should like to know how slowly the pain goes off. But don't write, unless the motion will be likely to make your sensibility more exquisite.

Your affectionate and truly healthy friend C. LAMB.

Mary thought a Letter from me might amuse you in your torment—

NOTE

[Robinson was the victim of a sudden attack of acute rheumatism. He had a course of Turkish baths at Brighton to cure him.

Here should come a letter from Lamb to George Dyer, dated April 29, 1829, in which Lamb thanks him for a sonnet apparently upon Agostino Isola, Emma's grandfather, and asks for some lines to Emma herself. See Appendix II., page 977.]

LETTERS 462 AND 463

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS HOOD

[No date. ? May, 1829.]

DEAR Hood,—We will look out for you on Wednesday, be sure, tho' we have not eyes like Emma, who, when I made her sit with her back to the window to keep her to her Latin, literally saw round backwards every one that past, and, O, [that] she were here to jump up and shriek out "There are the Hoods!" We have had two pretty letters from her, which I long to show you—together with Enfield in her May beauty.

Loves to Jane.

[*Here follow rough caricatures of Charles and his sister, and*] "I can't draw no better."

NOTE

[I have dated this letter May, 1829, because Miss Isola had just gone to Fornham, in Suffolk, whence presumably the two letters had come.

I append another letter to Hood without a date:—]

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

CALAMY is *good reading*. Mary is always thankful for Books in her way. I won't trouble you for any in *my way* yet, having enough to read. Young Hazlitt lives, at least his father does, at *3* or *36* [36 I have it down, with the *6* scratch'd out] Bouverie Street, Fleet Street. If not to be found, his mother's address is, Mrs. Hazlitt, Mrs. Tomlinson's, Potters Bar. At one or other he must be heard of. We shall expect you with the full moon. Meantime, our thanks. C. L.

We go on very quietly &c.

NOTE

["Calamy" would be Edmund Calamy (1671-1732), the historian of Nonconformity.

Mr. W. C. Hazlitt in his *Memoir of Hazlitt* says that his grandfather moved in 1829 to 3 Bouverie Street, and in the beginning of 1830 to 6 Frith Street, Soho. Young Hazlitt was William junior, afterwards Mr. Registrar Hazlitt and then seventeen years of age.]

LETTER 464

CHARLES LAMB TO WALTER WILSON

May 28, 1829.

DEAR W.,—Introduce this, or omit it, as you like. I think I wrote better about it in a letter to you from India H. If you have that, perhaps out of the two I could patch up a better thing, if you'd return both. But I am very poorly, and have been harassed with an illness of my sister's.

The Ode was printed in the "New Times" nearly the end of 1825, and I have only omitted some silly lines. Call it a corrected copy.

Yours ever, C. LAMB.

Put my name to either or both, as you like.

NOTE

[This letter contains Lamb's remarks on the Secondary Novels of Defoe, printed in Wilson's *Life and Times of De Foe*, Chapter XVII. of Vol. III., and also his "Ode to the Treadmill," which Wilson omitted from that work. See Vols. I. and V. of the present edition for both pieces.]

LETTER 465

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. June 3, 1829.]

DEAR B. B.—I am very much grieved indeed for the indisposition of poor Lucy. Your letter found me in domestic troubles. My sister is again taken ill, and I am obliged to remove her out of the house for many weeks, I fear, before I can hope to have her again. I have been very desolate indeed. My loneliness is a little abated by our young friend Emma having just come here for her holydays, and a schoolfellow of hers that was, with her. Still the house is not the same, tho' she is the same. Mary had been pleasing herself with the prospect of seeing her at this time; and with all their company, the house feels at times a frightful solitude. May you and I in no very long time have a more cheerful theme to write about, and congratulate upon a daughter's and a Sister's perfect recovery. Do not be long without telling me how Lucy goes on. I have a right to call her by her quaker-name, you know.

Emma knows that I am writing to you, and begs to be remembered to you with thankfulness for your ready contribution. Her album is filling apace. But of her contributors one, almost the flower of it, a most amiable young man and late acquaintance of mine, has been carried off by consumption, on return from one of the Azores islands, to which he went with hopes of mastering the disease, came back improved, went back to a most close and confined counting house, and relapsed. His name was Dibdin, Grandson of the Songster. You will be glad to hear that Emma, tho' unknown to you, has given the highest satisfaction in her little place of Governante in a Clergyman's family, which you may believe by the Parson and his Lady drinking poor Mary's health on her birthday, tho' they never saw her, merely because she was a friend of Emma's, and the Vicar also sent me a brace of partridges. To get out of home themes, have you seen Southey's Dialogues? His lake descriptions, and the account of his Library at Keswick, are very fine. But he needed not have called up the Ghost of More to hold the conversations with, which might as well have pass'd between A and B, or Caius and Lucius. It is making too free with a defunct Chancellor and Martyr.

I feel as if I had nothing farther to write about—O! I forget the prettiest letter I ever read, that I have received from "Pleasures of Memory" Rogers, in acknowledgment of a Sonnet I sent him on the Loss of his Brother. It is too long to transcribe, but I hope to shew it you some day, as I hope sometime again to see you, when all of us are well. Only it ends thus "We were nearly of an

age (he was the elder). He was the only person in the world in whose eyes I always appeared young."—

I will now take my leave with assuring you that I am most interested in hoping to hear favorable accounts from you.—

With kindest regards to A. K. and you

Yours truly, C. L.

NOTE

["Lucy"—Lucy Barton.

"Your ready contribution." I do not find that Barton ever printed his lines for Emma Isola's album.

"Dibdin"—John Bates Dibdin died in May, 1828.

Southey's *Sir Thomas More; or, Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society*, had just been published.

"Rogers." This was Rogers' letter:—

Many, many thanks. The verses are beautiful. I need not say with what feelings they were read. Pray accept the grateful acknowledgments of us all, and believe me when I say that nothing could have been a greater cordial to us in our affliction than such a testimony from such a quarter. He was—for none knew him so well—we were born within a year or two of each other—a man of a very high mind, and with less disguise than perhaps any that ever lived. Whatever he was, *that* we saw. He stood before his fellow beings (if I may be forgiven for saying so) almost as before his Maker: and God grant that we may all bear as severe an examination. He was an admirable scholar. His Dante and his Homer were as familiar to him as his Alphabets: and he had the tenderest heart. When a flock of turkies was stolen from his farm, the indignation of the poor far and wide was great and loud. To me he is the greatest loss, for we were nearly of an age; and there is now no human being alive in whose eyes I have always been young.

Under the date June 10, 1829, Mr. Macdonald prints a note from Lamb to Ayrton, which states that he has two young friends in the house. Here, therefore, I think, should come a letter from Lamb to William Hazlitt, Junior, printed by Mr. Hazlitt, but not available for this edition, in which Lamb says that he cannot see Mrs. Hazlitt this time. He adds that the ladies are very pleasant. Emma Isola adds a letter which tells us that the ladies are herself and her friend Maria. This would be the Maria of Lamb's sonnet "Harmony in Unlikeness," evidently written at this time (see Vol. V., page 54, where I make the mistake of assuming Lamb to mean his sister).]

LETTER 466

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[See Note.]

AT midsummer or soon after (I will let you know the previous day), I will take a day with you in the purlieus of my old haunts. No offence has been taken, any more than meant. My

house is full at present, but empty of its chief pride. She is dead to me for many months. But when I see you, then I will say, Come and see me. With undiminished friendship to you both,

Your faithful but queer C. L.

How you frighted me! Never write again, "Coleridge is dead," at the end of a line, and tamely come in with "to his friends" at the beginning of another. Love is quicker, and fear from love, than the transition ocular from Line to Line.

NOTE

[This Letter is dated 1829 in *Harper's Magazine*. The postmark, I have recently discovered, is July 2, 1832.]

LETTER 467

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

Enfield Chase Side Saturday 25 July A.D. 1829.—11 A.M.

THERE—a fuller plumper juiceier date never dropt from Idumean palm. Am I in the dateive case now? if not, a fig for dates, which is more than a date is worth. I never stood much affected to these limitary specialities. Least of all since the date of my superannuation.

What have I with Time to do?
Slaves of desks, twas meant for you.

Dear B. B.—Your hand writing has conveyed much pleasure to me in report of Lucy's restoration. Would I could send you as good news of my poor Lucy. But some wearisome weeks I must remain lonely yet. I have had the loneliest time near 10 weeks, broken by a short apparition of Emma for her holydays, whose departure only deepend the returning solitude, and by 10 days I have past in Town. But Town, with all my native hankering after it, is not what it was. The streets, the shops are left, but all old friends are gone. And in London I was frightfully convinced of this as I past houses and places—empty caskets now. I have ceased to care almost about any body. The bodies I cared for are in graves, or dispersed. My old Clubs, that lived so long and flourish'd so steadily, are crumbled away. When I took leave of our adopted young friend at Charing Cross, 'twas heavy unfeeling rain, and I had no where to go. Home have I none—and not a sympathising house to turn to in the great city. Never did the waters of the heaven pour down on a forlorner head. Yet I tried 10 days at a sort of a friend's house, but it was large and straggling—one of the individuals of my old long knot of friends, card players, pleasant companions—that have tumbled to pieces into dust and other things—and I got home on Thursday, convinced that I was better to get home to my

hole at Enfield, and hide like a sick cat in my corner. Less than a month I hope will bring home Mary. She is at Fulham, looking better in her health than ever, but sadly rambling, and scarce showing any pleasure in seeing me, or curiosity when I should come again. But the old feelings will come back again, and we shall drown old sorrows over a game at Picquet again. But 'tis a tedious cut out of a life of sixty four, to lose twelve or thirteen weeks every year or two. And to make me more alone, our illtemperd maid is gone, who with all her airs, was yet a home piece of furniture, a record of better days; the young thing that has succeeded her is good and attentive, but she is nothing—and I have no one here to talk over old matters with. Scolding and quarreling have something of familiarity and a community of interest—they imply acquaintance—they are of resentment, which is of the family of dearness. I can neither scold nor quarrel at this insignificant implement of household services; she is less than a cat, and just better than a deal Dresser. What I can do, and do overdo, is to walk, but deadly long are the days—these summer all-day days, with but a half hour's candlelight and no firelight. I do not write, tell your kind inquisitive Eliza, and can hardly read. In the ensuing Blackwood will be an old rejected farce of mine, which may be new to you, if you see that same dull Medley. What things are all the Magazines now! I contrive studiously not to see them. The popular New Monthly is perfect trash. Poor Hessey, I suppose you see, has failed. Hunt and Clarke too. Your "Vulgar truths" will be a good name—and I think your prose must please—me at least—but 'tis useless to write poetry with no purchasers. 'Tis cold work Authorship without something to puff one into fashion. Could you not write something on Quakerism—for Quakers to read—but nominally addrest to Non Quakers? explaining your dogmas—waiting on the Spirit—by the analogy of human calmness and patient waiting on the judgment? I scarcely know what I mean, but to make Non Quakers reconciled to your doctrines, by shewing something like them in mere human operations—but I hardly understand myself, so let it pass for nothing. I pity you for over-work, but I assure you no-work is worse. The mind preys on itself, the most unwholesome food. I brag'd formerly that I could not have too much time. I have a surfeit. With few years to come, the days are wearisome. But weariness is not eternal. Something will shine out to take the load off, that flags me, which is at present intolerable. I have killed an hour or two in this poor scrawl. I am a sanguinary murderer of time, and would kill him inchmeal just now. But the snake is vital. Well, I shall write merrier anon.—'Tis the present copy of my countenance I send—and to complain is a little to alleviate.—May you enjoy yourself as far as the wicked wood will let you

—and think that you are not quite alone, as I am. Health to Lucia and to Anna and kind remembces.

Yours forlorn. C. L.

NOTE

["What have I with Time to do? . . ." I have not found this.

"Out of a life of sixty-four." Mary Lamb was born December 3, 1764.

"Your kind . . . Eliza"—Eliza Barton, Bernard's sister.

"Rejected farce." "The Pawnbroker's Daughter" was printed in *Blackwood*, January, 1830.

"I brag'd formerly." Referring I think to his sonnet "Leisure."]

LETTER 468

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[No date. Late July, 1829.]

MY dear Allsop—I thank you for thinking of my recreation. But I am best here, I feel I am. I have tried town lately, but came back worse. Here I must wait till my loneliness has its natural cure. Besides that, though I am not very sanguine, yet I live in hopes of better news from Fulham, and can not be out of the way. 'Tis ten weeks to-morrow.—I saw Mary a week since, she was in excellent bodily health, but otherwise far from well. But a week or so may give a turn. Love to Mrs. A. and children, and fair weather accompy you. C. L.

Tuesday.

LETTER 469

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. Sept. 22, 1829.]

DEAR Moxon, If you can oblige me with the Garrick Papers or Ann of Gierstien, I shall be thankful. I am almost fearful whether my Sister will be able to enjoy any reading at present for since her coming home, after 12 weeks, she has had an unusual relapse into the saddest low spirits that ever poor creature had, and has been some weeks under medical care. She is unable to see any yet. When she is better I shall be very glad to talk

over your ramble with you. Have you done any sonnets, can you send me any to overlook? I am almost in despair, Mary's case seems so hopeless.

Believe me
Yours
C. L.

I do not want Mr. Jameson or Lady Morgan.

Enfield
Wedny.

NOTE

["The Garrick Papers." Lamb refers, I suppose, to the *Private Correspondence of David Garrick*, in some form previous to its publication in 1832.

"Anne of Geierstein." Scott's novel was published this year.

"Mr. Jameson." I cannot find any book by a Mr. Jameson likely to have been offered to Lamb; but Mrs. Jameson's *Loves of the Poets* was published this year. Probably he meant to write Mrs. Jameson. Lady Morgan was the author of *The Wild Irish Girl* and other novels. Her 1829 book was *The Book of the Boudoir*.]

LETTER 470

CHARLES LAMB TO JAMES GILLMAN

Chase-Side, Enfield, 26th Oct., 1829.

DEAR Gillman,—Allsop brought me your kind message yesterday. How can I account for having not visited Highgate this long time? Change of place seemed to have changed me. How grieved I was to hear in what indifferent health Coleridge has been, and I not to know of it! A little school divinity, well applied, may be healing. I send him honest Tom of Aquin; that was always an obscure great idea to me: I never thought or dreamed to see him in the flesh, but t'other day I rescued him from a stall in Barbican, and brought him off in triumph. He comes to greet Coleridge's acceptance, for his shoe-latchets I am unworthy to unloose. Yet there are pretty pro's and con's, and such unsatisfactory learning in him. Commend me to the question of etiquette—"*utrum annunciatio debuerit fieri per angelum*"—*Quæst.* 30, *Articulus* 2. I protest, till now I had thought Gabriel a fellow of some mark and livelihood, not a simple esquire, as I find him. Well, do not break your lay brains, nor I neither, with these curious nothings. They are nuts to our dear friend, whom hoping to see at your first friendly hint that it will be convenient, I end with begging our very kindest loves

to Mrs. Gillman. We have had a sorry house of it here. Our spirits have been reduced till we were at hope's end what to do—obliged to quit this house, and afraid to engage another, till in extremity I took the desperate resolve of kicking house and all down, like Bunyan's pack; and here we are in a new life at board and lodging, with an honest couple our neighbours. We have ridded ourselves of the cares of dirty acres; and the change, though of less than a week, has had the most beneficial effects on Mary already. She looks two years and a half younger for it. But we have had sore trials.

God send us one happy meeting!—Yours faithfully,

C. Lamb.

Note

["The question of etiquette." See the *Summa Theologicæ*, Pars Tertia, Quest. XXX., Articulus II. It would be interesting to know whether Lamb remembered an earlier letter (see page 117) in which he had set Coleridge some similar "nuts."

"In a new life." The Lambs moved next door, to the Westwoods. The house, altered externally, still stands (1904) and is known as "Westwood Cottage." I give a drawing of the front as it now is.]

LETTER 471

CHARLES LAMB TO VINCENT NOVELLO

[P.M. Probably Nov. 10, 1829.]

Dear FUGUE-IST,
or hear'st thou rather
CONTRAPUNTIST— ?

WE expect you four (as many as the Table will hold without squeeging) at Mrs. Westwood's Table D'Hote on Thursday. You will find the White House shut up, and us moved under the wing of the Phœnix, which gives us friendly refuge. Beds for guests, marry, we have none, but cleanly accomodings at the Crown & Horseshoe.

Yours harmonically, C. L.

[Addressed: Vincentio (what Ho!) Novello, a Squire,
66, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields.]

NOTE

["The Phœnix." Mr. Westwood was agent for the Phœnix Insurance Company, and the badge of that office was probably on the house.]

LETTER 472

CHARLES LAMB TO WALTER WILSON

Enfield, 15th November, 1829.

MY dear Wilson,—I have not opened a packet of unknown contents for many years, that gave me so much pleasure as when I disclosed your three volumes. I have given them a careful perusal, and they have taken their degree of classical books upon my shelves. De Foe was always my darling; but what darkness was I in as to far the larger part of his writings! I have now an epitome of them all. I think the way in which you have done the "Life" the most judicious you could have pitched upon. You have made him tell his own story, and your comments are in keeping with the tale. Why, I never heard of such a work as "the Review." Strange that in my stall-hunting days I never so much as lit upon an odd volume of it. This circumstance looks as if they were never of any great circulation. But I may have met with 'em,

and not knowing the prize, overpast 'em. I was almost a stranger to the whole history of Dissenters in those reigns, and picked my way through that strange book the "Consolidator" at random. How affecting are some of his personal appeals! what a machine of projects he set on foot! and following writers have picked his pocket of the patents. I do not understand whereabouts in *Roxana* he himself left off. I always thought the complete-tourist-sort of description of the town she passes through on her last embarkation miserably unseasonable and out of place. I knew not they were spurious. Enlighten me as to where the apocryphal matter commences. I, by accident, can correct one A. D. "Family Instructor," vol. ii. 1718; you say his first volume had then reached the fourth edition; now I have a fifth, printed for Eman. Matthews, 1717. So have I plucked one rotten date, or rather picked it up where it had inadvertently fallen, from your flourishing date tree, the Palm of Engaddi. I may take it for my pains. I think yours a book which every public library must have, and every English scholar should have. I am sure it has enriched my meagre stock of the author's works. I seem to be twice as opulent. Mary is by my side just finishing the second volume. It must have interest to divert her away so long from her modern novels. Colburn will be quite jealous. I was a little disappointed at my "Ode to the Treadmill" not finding a place; but it came out of time. The two papers of mine will puzzle the reader, being so akin. Odd that, never keeping a scrap of my own letters, with some fifteen years' interval I should nearly have said the same things. But I shall always feel happy in having my name go down any how with De Foe's, and that of his historiographer. I promise myself, if not immortality, yet diuternity of being read in consequence. We have both had much illness this year; and feeling infirmities and fretfulness grow upon us, we have cast off the cares of housekeeping, sold off our goods, and commenced boarding and lodging with a very comfortable old couple next door to where you found us. We use a sort of common table. Nevertheless, we have reserved a private one for an old friend; and when Mrs. Wilson and you revisit Babylon, we shall pray you to make it yours for a season. Our very kindest remembrances to you both.

From your old friend and *fellow-journalist*, now in *two instances*, C. LAMB.

Hazlitt is going to make your book a basis for a review of De Foe's Novels in the "Edinbro'." I wish I had health and spirits to do it. Hone I have not seen, but I doubt not he will be much pleased with your performance. I very much hope you will give us an account of Dunton, &c. But what I should more like to

see would be a Life and Times of Bunyan. Wishing health to you and long life to your healthy book, again I subscribe me,

Yours in verity, C. L.

NOTE

[Wilson's *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel De Foe* had just been published in three volumes, with the date 1830.

Defoe's *Review* was started in February, 1704, under the title, *A Review of the Affairs of France . . . . purged from the Errors and Partiality of News-writers, and Petty-Statesmen, of all sides.* It continued until May, 1713. *The Consolidator; or, Memoirs of sundry Transactions from the world in the moon. Translated from the Lunar Language*, was published in 1705, a political satire, which, it has been thought, gave hints to Swift for Gulliver.

"Palm of Engaddi." Engedi, according to Josephus, was celebrated for its palm trees.

Lamb had sent Wilson his "Ode to the Treadmill" (see page 810). The substance of his letter of December 16, 1822, was printed by Wilson in Chapter XXII. of Vol. III.; the new material which he wrote especially for the book (see page 810) was printed in Chapter XVII. of the same volume. The space dividing them was not fifteen years but seven.

"Diuternity." Spelt "diuturnity." A rare word signifying long duration.

"*Fellow-journalist.*" The other instance would be in connection with the journals of the India House, where Wilson had once been a clerk with Lamb.

Hazlitt's review of Wilson's book is in the *Edinburgh* for January, 1830, with this reference to Lamb's criticisms: "*Captain Singleton* is a hardened, brutal desperado, without one redeeming trait, or almost human feeling; and, in spite of what Mr. Lamb says of his lonely musings and agonies of a conscience-stricken repentance, we find nothing of this in the text."

"Dunton." This would be John Dunton (1659-1733), the bookseller, and author of *The Athenian Gazette*, *Dunton's Whipping-Post*, and scores of pamphlets and satires.]

LETTER 473

(? *Fragment*)

CHARLES LAMB TO JAMES GILLMAN

[No date. ? November 29, 1829.]

PRAY trust me with the "Church History," as well as the "Worthies." A moon shall restore both. Also give me back Him of Aquinum. In return you have the *light of my countenance*. Adieu.

P.S.—A sister also of mine comes with it. A son of Nimshi drives her. Their driving will have been furious, impassioned. Pray God they have not toppled over the tunnel! I promise you I fear their steed, bred out of the wind without father, semi-Melchisedecish, hot, phætontic. From my country lodgings at Enfield. C. L.

NOTE

[The *Church History* and the *Worthies* are by Fuller.

"Light of my countenance." Mr. Hazlitt says that this was a copy of Brook Pulham's etching.

"A son of Nimshi"—Jehu.

"The tunnel"—the new Highgate Archway.

"Semi-Melchisedecish." See Hebrews vii. 3, "Without father, without mother, without descent."]

LETTER 474

CHARLES LAMB TO JAMES GILLMAN

30 Nov., 1829.

DEAR G.,—The excursionists reached home, and the good town of Enfield a little after four, without slip or dislocation. Little has transpired concerning the events of the back-journey, save that on passing the house of 'Squire Mellish, situate a stone-bow's cast from the hamlet, Father Westwood, with a good-natured wonderment, exclaimed, "I cannot think what is gone of Mr. Mellish's rooks. I fancy they have taken flight somewhere; but I have missed them two or three years past." All this while, according to his fellow-traveller's report, the rookery was darkening the air above with undiminished population, and deafening all ears

but his with their cawings. But nature has been gently withdrawing such phenomena from the notice of Thomas Westwood's senses, from the time he began to miss the rooks. T. Westwood has passed a retired life in this hamlet of thirty or forty years, living upon the minimum which is consistent with gentility, yet a star among the minor gentry, receiving the bows of the tradespeople and courtesies of the alms' women daily. Children venerate him not less for his external show of gentry, than they wonder at him for a gentle rising endorsation of the person, not amounting to a hump, or if a hump, innocuous as the hump of the buffalo, and coronative of as mild qualities. 'Tis a throne on which patience seems to sit—the proud perch of a self-respecting humility, stooping with condescension. Thereupon the cares of life have sate, and rid him easily. For he has thrid the *angustiæ domûs* with dexterity. Life opened upon him with comparative brilliancy. He set out as a rider or traveller for a wholesale house, in which capacity he tells of many hair-breadth escapes that befell him; one especially, how he rode a mad horse into the town of Devizes; how horse and rider arrived in a foam, to the utter consternation of the expostulating hostlers, inn-keepers, &c. It seems it was sultry weather, piping hot; the steed tormented into frenzy with gad-flies, long past being roadworthy; but safety and the interest of the house he rode for were incompatible things; a fall in serge cloth was expected; and a mad entrance they made of it. Whether the exploit was purely voluntary, or partially; or whether a certain personal defiguration in the man part of this extraordinary centaur (non-assistive to partition of natures) might not enforce the conjunction, I stand not to inquire. I look not with 'skew eyes into the deeds of heroes. The hosier that was burnt with his shop, in Field-lane, on Tuesday night, shall have past to heaven for me like a Marian Martyr, provided always, that he consecrated the fortuitous incremation with a short ejaculation in the exit, as much as if he had taken his state degrees of martyrdom *in formâ* in the market vicinage. There is adoptive as well as acquisitive sacrifice. Be the animus what it might, the fact is indisputable, that this composition was seen flying all abroad, and mine host of Daintry may yet remember its passing through his town, if his scores are not more faithful than his memory. After this exploit (enough for one man), Thomas Westwood seems to have subsided into a less hazardous occupation; and in the twenty-fifth year of his age we find him a haberdasher in Bow Lane: yet still retentive of his early riding (though leaving it to rawer stomachs), and Christmasly at night sithence to this last, and shall to his latest Christmas, hath he, doth he, and shall he, tell after supper the story of the insane steed and the desperate rider. Save for Bedlam or Luke's no eye could have guessed that

melting day what house he rid for. But he reposes on his bridles, and after the ups and downs (metaphoric only) of a life behind the counter—hard riding sometimes, I fear, for poor T. W.—with the scrapings together of the shop, and *one anecdote*, he hath finally settled at Enfield; by hard economising, gardening, building for himself, hath reared a mansion, married a daughter, qualified a son for a counting-house, gotten the respect of high and low, served for self or substitute the greater parish offices: hath a special voice at vestries; and, domiciliating us, hath reflected a portion of his house-keeping respectability upon your humble servants. We are greater, being his lodgers, than when we were substantial renters. His name is a passport to take off the sneers of the native Enfielders against obnoxious foreigners. We are endenizened. Thus much of T. Westwood have I thought fit to acquaint you, that you may see the exemplary reliance upon Providence with which I entrusted so dear a charge as my own sister to the guidance of a man that rode the mad horse into Devizes. To come from his heroic character, all the amiable qualities of domestic life concentre in this tamed Bellerophon. He is excellent over a glass of grog; just as pleasant without it; laughs when he hears a joke, and when (which is much oftener) he hears it not; sings glorious old sea songs on festival nights; and but upon a slight acquaintance of two years, Coleridge, is as dear a deaf old man to us, as old Norris, rest his soul! was after fifty. To him and his scanty literature (what there is of it, *sound*) have we flown from the metropolis and its cursed annualists, reviewers, authors, and the whole muddy ink press of that stagnant pool.

Now, Gillman again, you do not know the treasure of the Fullers. I calculate on having massy reading till Christmas. All I want here, is books of the true sort, not those things in boards that moderns mistake for books—what they club for at book clubs.

I did not mean to cheat you with a blank side; but my eye smarts, for which I am taking medicine, and abstain, this day at least, from any aliments but milk-porridge, the innocent taste of which I am anxious to renew after a half-century's disacquaintance. If a blot fall here like a tear, it is not pathos, but an angry eye.

Farewell, while my *specilla* are sound.

Yours and yours, C. Lamb.

Note

[This letter records the safe return of Mary Lamb with the Fullers.

"Squire Mellish." William Mellish, M.P. for Middlesex for some years.

"*Angustiæ domûs.*" Narrow ways of poverty.

Thomas Westwood's son, for whom Lamb found an appointment, wrote some excellent articles in *Notes and Queries* many years later describing the Lambs' life at his father's.

"Old Norris." See Letter 386.

I give here a drawing of the Lambs' sitting-room, from the garden of Westwood Cottage, as it now is (1904):—]

LETTER 475

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. December 8, 1829.]

MY dear B. B.—You are very good to have been uneasy abou us, and I have the satisfaction to tell you, that we are bot in better health and spirits than we have been for a year or tw past; I may say, than we have been since we have been at Enfield The cause may not appear quite adequate, when I tell you, that course of ill health and spirits brought us to the determination o giving up our house here, and we are boarding and lodging with worthy old couple, long inhabitants of Enfield, where everything i done for us without our trouble, further than a reasonable weekl

payment. We should have done so before, but it is not easy to flesh and blood to give up an ancient establishment, to discard old Penates, and from house keepers to turn house-sharers. (N.B. We are not in the Workhouse.) Dioclesian in his garden found more repose than on the imperial seat of Rome, and the nob of Charles the Fifth aked seldomer under a monk's cowl than under the diadem. With such shadows of assimilation we countenance our degradation. With such a load of dignifyd cares just removed from our shoulders, we can the more understand and pity the accession to yours, by the advancement to an Assigneeship. I will tell you honestly B. B. that it has been long my deliberate judgment, that all Bankrupts, of what denomination civil or religious whatever, ought to be hang'd. The pity of mankind has for ages run in a wrong channel, and has been diverted from poor Creditors (how many I have known sufferers! Hazlitt has just been defrauded of £100 by his Bookseller-friend's breaking) to scoundrel Debtors. I know all the topics, that distress may come upon an honest man without his fault, that the failure of one that he trusted was his calamity &c. &c. Then let *both* be hang'd. O how careful it would make traders! These are my deliberate thoughts after many years' experience in matters of trade. What a world of trouble it would save you, if Friend * * * * * had been immediately hangd, without benefit of clergy, which (being a Quaker I presume) he could not reasonably insist upon. Why, after slaving twelve months in your assign-business, you will be enabled to declare seven pence in the Pound in all human probability. B. B., he should be *hanged*. Trade will never re-flourish in this land till such a Law is establish'd. I write big not to save ink but eyes, mine having been troubled with reading thro' three folios of old Fuller in almost as few days, and I went to bed last night in agony, and am writing with a vial of eye water before me, alternately dipping in vial and inkstand. This may enflame my zeal against Bankrupts—but it was my speculation when I could see better. Half the world's misery (Eden else) is owing to want of money, and all that want is owing to Bankrupts. I declare I would, if the State wanted Practitioners, turn Hangman myself, and should have great pleasure in hanging the first after my salutary law should be establish'd. I have seen no annuals and wish to see none. I like your fun upon them, and was quite pleased with Bowles's sonnet. Hood is or was at Brighton, but a note, prose or rhime, to him, Robert Street, Adelphi, I am sure would extract a copy of *his*, which also I have not seen. Wishing you and yours all Health, I conclude while these frail glasses are to me—eyes. C. L.

NOTE

["Dioclesian." The Emperor Diocletian abdicated the throne after twenty-one years' reign, and retired to his garden. Charles V. of Germany imitated the Roman Emperor, and after thirty-six years took the cowl.

"Hazlitt has just been defrauded." The failure of Hunt & Clarke, the publishers of the *Life of Napoleon*, cost Hazlitt £500. He had received only £140 towards this, in a bill which on their insolvency became worthless.

"Friend * * * * * *." Not identifiable.

"Bowles's sonnet" I have not found.]

LETTER 476

(In two parts)

I.—CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

[P.M. January 22, 1830.]

AND is it a year since we parted from you at the steps of Edmonton Stage? There are not now the years that there used to be. The tale of the dwindled age of men, reported of successional mankind, is true of the same man only. We do not live a year in a year now. 'Tis a punctum stans. The seasons pass us with indifference. Spring cheers not, nor winter heightens our gloom, Autumn hath foregone its moralities, they are hey-pass re-pass [as] in a show-box. Yet as far as last year occurs back, for they scarce shew a reflex now, they make no memory as heretofore—'twas sufficiently gloomy. Let the sullen nothing pass.

Suffice it that after sad spirits prolonged thro' many of its months, as it called them, we have cast our skins, have taken a farewell of the pompous troublesome trifle calld housekeeping, and are settled down into poor boarders and lodgers at next door with an old couple, the Baucis and Baucida of dull Enfield. Here we have nothing to do with our victuals but to eat them, with the garden but to see it grow, with the tax gatherer but to hear him knock, with the maid but to hear her scolded. Scot and lot, butcher, baker, are things unknown to us save as spectators of the pageant. We are fed we know not how, quietists, confiding ravens. We have the otium pro dignitate, a respectable insignificance. Yet in the self condemned obliviousness, in the stagnation, some molesting yearnings of life, not

quite kill'd, rise, prompting me that there was a London, and that I was of that old Jerusalem. In dreams I am in Fleetmarket, but I wake and cry to sleep again. I die hard, a stubborn Eloisa in this detestable Paraclete. What have I gained by health? intolerable dulness. What by early hours and moderate meals?—a total blank. O never let the lying poets be believed, who 'tice men from the chearful haunts of streets—or think they mean it not of a country village. In the ruins of Palmyra I could gird myself up to solitude, or muse to the snorings of the Seven Sleepers, but to have a little teazing image of a town about one, country folks that do not look like country folks, shops two yards square, half a dozen apples and two penn'orth of overlookd gingerbread for the lofty fruiterers of Oxford Street—and, for the immortal book and print stalls, a circulating library that stands still, where the shew-picture is a last year's Valentine, and whither the fame of the last ten Scotch novels has not yet travel'd (marry, they just begin to be conscious of the Red Gauntlet), to have a new plasterd flat church, and to be wishing that it was but a Cathedral. The very blackguards here are degenerate. The topping gentry, stock brokers. The passengers too many to ensure your quiet, or let you go about whistling, or gaping—too few to be the fine indifferent pageants of Fleet Street. Confining, room-keeping thickest winter is yet more bearable here than the gaudy months. Among one's books at one's fire by candle one is soothed into an oblivion that one is not in the country, but with the light the green fields return, till I gaze, and in a calenture can plunge myself into Saint Giles's. O let no native Londoner imagine that health, and rest, and innocent occupation, interchange of converse sweet and recreative study, can make the country any thing better than altogether odious and detestable. A garden was the primitive prison till man with promethean felicity and boldness luckily sinn'd himself out of it. Thence followd Babylon, Nineveh, Venice, London, haberdashers, goldsmiths, taverns, playhouses, satires, epigrams, puns—these all came in on the town part, and the thither side of innocence. Man found out inventions.

From my den I return you condolence for your decaying sight, not for any thing there is to see in the country, but for the miss of the pleasure of reading a London newspaper. The poets are as well to listen to, any thing high may, nay must, be read out—you read it to yourself with an imaginary auditor—but the light paragraphs must be glid over by the proper eye, mouthing mumbles their gossamery substance. 'Tis these trifles I should mourn in fading sight. A newspaper is the single gleam of comfort I receive here, it comes from rich Cathay with tidings of mankind. Yet I could not attend to it read out by the most beloved voice. But your eyes do not get worse, I gather. O for the collyrium of Tobias inclosed in a

whiting's liver to send you with no apocryphal good wishes! The last long time I heard from you, you had knock'd your head against something. Do not do so. For your head (I do not flatter) is not a nob, or the top of a brass nail, or the end of a nine pin—unless a Vulcanian hammer could fairly batter a Recluse out of it, then would I bid the smirch'd god knock and knock lustily, the two-handed skinker. What a nice long letter Dorothy has written! Mary must squeeze out a line propriâ manu, but indeed her fingers have been incorrigibly nervous to letter writing for a long interval. 'Twill please you all to hear that, tho' I fret like a lion in a net, her present health and spirits are better than they have been for some time past: she is absolutely three years and a half younger, as I tell her, since we have adopted this boarding plan. Our providers are an honest pair, dame Westwood and her husband—he, when the light of prosperity shined on them, a moderately thriving haberdasher within Bow Bells, retired sincewith something under a competence, writes himself parcel gentleman, hath borne parish offices, sings fine old sea songs at threescore and ten, sighs only now and then when he thinks that he has a son on his hands about 15, whom he finds a difficulty in getting out into the world, and then checks a sigh with muttering, as I once heard him prettily, not meaning to be heard, "I have married my daughter however,"—takes the weather as it comes, outsides it to town in severest season, and a' winter nights tells old stories not tending to literature, how comfortable to author-rid folks! and has *one anecdote*, upon which and about forty pounds a year he seems to have retired in green old age. It was how he was a *rider* in his youth, travelling for shops, and once (not to baulk his employer's bargain) on a sweltering day in August, rode foaming into Dunstable upon a *mad horse* to the dismay and expostulary wonderment of innkeepers, ostlers &c. who declared they would not have bestrid the beast to win the Darby. Understand the creature gall'd to death and desperation by gad flies, cormorants winged, worse than beset Inachus' daughter. This he tells, this he brindles and burnishes on a' winter's eves, 'tis his star of set glory, his rejuvenescence to descant upon. Far from me be it (dii avertant) to look a gift story in the mouth, or cruelly to surmise (as those who doubt the plunge of Curtius) that the inseparate conjuncture of man and beast, the centaur-phenomenon that staggered all Dunstable, might have been the effect of unromantic necessity, that the horse-part carried the reasoning, willy nilly, that needs must when such a devil drove, that certain spiral configurations in the frame of Thomas Westwood unfriendly to alighting, made the alliance more forcible than voluntary. Let him enjoy his fame for me, nor let me hint a whisper that shall dismount Bellerophon. Put case he was an involuntary martyr, yet if in the fiery conflict

he buckled the soul of a constant haberdasher to him, and adopted his flames, let Accident and He share the glory! You would all like Thomas Westwood.

How weak is painting to describe a man! Say that he stands four feet and a nail high by his own yard measure, which like the Sceptre of Agamemnon shall never sprout again, still you have no adequate idea, nor when I tell you that his dear hump, which I have favord in the picture, seems to me of the buffalo—indicative and repository of mild qualities, a budget of kindnesses, still you have not the man. Knew you old Norris of the Temple, 60 years ours and our father's friend, he was not more natural to us than this old W. the acquaintance of scarce more weeks. Under his roof now ought I to take my rest, but that back-looking ambition tells me I might yet be a Londoner. Well, if we ever do move, we have encumbrances the less to impede us: all our furniture has faded under the auctioneer's hammer, going for nothing like the tarnishd frippery of the prodigal, and we have only a spoon or two left to bless us. Clothed we came into Enfield, and naked we must go out of it. I would live in London shirtless, bookless. Henry Crabb is at Rome, advices to that effect have reach'd Bury. But by solemn legacy he bequeath'd at parting (whether he should live or die) a Turkey of Suffolk to be sent every succeeding Xmas to us and divers other friends. What a genuine old Bachelor's action! I fear he will find the air of Italy too classic. His station is in the Hartz forest, his soul is *Bego'ethed.* Miss Kelly we never see; Talfourd not this half-year; the latter flourishes, but the exact number of his children, God forgive me, I have utterly forgotten, we single people are often out in our count there. Shall I say two? One darling I know they have lost within a twelvemonth, but scarce known to me by sight, and that was a second child lost. We see scarce anybody. We have just now Emma with us for her holydays: you remember her playing at brag with Mr. Quillinan at poor Monkhouse's! She is grown an agreeable young woman; she sees what I write, so you may understand me with limitations. She was our inmate for a twelvemonth, grew natural to us, and then they told us it was best for her to go out as a Governess, and so she went out, and we were only two of us, and our pleasant house-mate is changed to an occasional visitor. If

they want my sister to go out (as they call it) there will be only one of us. Heaven keep us all from this acceding to Unity!

Can I cram loves enough to you all in this little O? Excuse particularizing. C. L.

LETTER 476 (*continued*)

II.—MARY LAMB TO DOROTHY WORDSWORTH

MY dear Miss Wordsworth, Charles has left me space to fill up with my own poor scribble; which I must do as well as I can, being quite out of practise, and after he has been reading his queer letter out to us I can hardly put down in a plain style all I had to tell you, how pleasant your handwriting was to me. He has lumped you all together in one rude remembrance at the end, but I beg to send my love individually and by *name* to Mr. and Mrs. Wordsworth, to Miss Hutchinson, whom we often talk of, and think of as being with you always, to the dutiful good daughter and patient amanuensis Dora, and even to Johanna, whom we have not seen, if she will accept it. Charles has told you of my long illness and our present settlement, which I assure you is very quiet and comfortable to me, and to him too, if he would own it. I am very sorry we shall not see John, but I never go to town, nor my brother but at his quarterly visits at the India House, and when he does, he finds it melancholy, so many of our old friends being dead or dispersed, and the very streets, he says altering every day. Many thanks for your Letter and the nice news in it, which I should have replied to more at large than I see he has done. I am sure it deserved it. He has not said a word about your intentions for Rome, which I sincerely wish you health one day to accomplish. In that case we may meet by the way. We are so glad to hear dear *little* William is doing well. If you knew how happy your letters made us you would write I know more frequently. Pray think of this. How chearfully should we pay the postage *every week*.

Your affectionate MARY LAMB.

NOTE

[Now for the first time printed in full, with Mary Lamb's addition.

"Baucis and Baucida." A slip, I suppose, for Philemon and Baucis (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*).

"Eloisa . . . Paraclete." The hermitage to which Abelard, Eloisa's lover, retired became a monastic school known as Paraclete.

Redgauntlet dated from 1824.

"In a calenture." A calenture is a form of fever at sea in which the sufferer believes himself to be surrounded by green fields, and often leaps overboard. Wordsworth describes one in "The Brothers."

"From rich Cathay." A recollection of a passage in *The Seasons*, "Winter," 807-809:—

> the caravan
> Bends to the golden coast of rich Cathay
> With news of human kind.

"The collyrium of Tobias." See Tobit xi. 11-13. Tobias restored his father's sight with the gall of a fish.

"A Recluse"—Wordsworth's promised poem, that was never completed. First printed in 1888.

"*Dii avertant*"—"The gods forbid" (Cicero, *Phil.*, III., 14, 35).

"Henry Crabb." Crabb Robinson was a personal friend of Goethe's. He had spent some days with him at Weimar in the summer of 1829. Goethe told Robinson that he admired Lamb's sonnet "The Family Name."

"Mr. Quillinan"—Edward Quillinan, afterwards Wordsworth's son-in-law.

"Johanna." Joanna Hutchinson, Mrs. Wordsworth's sister. Joanna of the laugh.

"John." John Wordsworth, Wordsworth's eldest son, was now twenty-six; William, Wordsworth's second son, no longer little, was nineteen.]

LETTER 477

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. 25 February 1830.]

DEAR B. B.—To reply to you by return of post, I must gobble up my dinner, and dispatch this in propriâ Personâ to the office, to be in in time. So take it from me hastily, that you are perfectly welcome to furnish A. C. with the scrap, which I had almost forgotten writing. The more my character comes to be known, the less my veracity will come to be suspected. Time every day clears up some suspected narrative of Herodotus, Bruce, and others of us great Travellers. Why, that Joseph Paice was as real a person as Joseph Hume, and a great deal pleasanter. A careful observer of life, Bernard, has no need to invent. Nature romances it for him. Dinner plates rattle, and I positively shall incur indigestion by carrying it half concocted to the Post House. Let me con-

gratulate you on the Spring coming in, and do you in return condole with me for the Winter going out. When the old one goes, seldome comes a better. I dread the prospect of Summer, with his all day long days. No need of his assistance to make country places dull. With fire and candle light, I can dream myself in Holborn. With lightsome skies shining in to bed time, I can not. This Meseck, and these tents of Kedar—I would dwell in the skirts of Jericho rather, and think every blast of the coming in Mail a Ram's Horn. Give me old London at Fire and Plague times, rather than these tepid gales, healthy country air, and purposeless exercise. Leg of mutton absolutely on the table.

Take our hasty loves and short farewell. C. L.

NOTE

[A. C. was Allan Cunningham, who wanted Lamb's letter on Blake (see page 642) for his *Lives of the Painters*. It was not, however, used there until included in Mrs. Charles Heaton's edition in Bohn's Library.

"Bruce"—the Abyssinian explorer, whom the Christ's Hospital boys used to emulate, as Lamb tells us in the *Elia* essay on Newspapers.

"Joseph Paice"—a Director of the South-Sea Company and Lamb's first employer, of whom he writes in the *Elia* essay on "Modern Gallantry" (see notes to Vol. II., page 361).

"This Meseck"—"Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar" (Psalms cxx. 5). Lamb was very fond of this verse. See also Joshua vi.

Mr. Hazlitt prints a letter in his Bohn edition to Moxon, which he dates February 21, 1831 (should be 1830), saying that a letter has just arrived from Mrs. Williams indicating that Miss Isola was not well and must have a long holiday. The illness increased very rapidly, becoming a serious attack of brain fever.]

LETTER 478

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. WILLIAMS

[February 26, 1830.]

DEAR Madam,—May God bless you for your attention to our poor Emma! I am so shaken with your sad news I can scarce write. She is too ill to be removed at present; but we can only say that if she is spared, when that can be practicable, we have always a home for her. Speak to her of it, when she is

capable of understanding, and let me conjure you to let us know from day to day, the state she is in. But one line is all we crave. Nothing we can do for her, that shall not be done. We shall be in the terriblest suspense. We had no notion she was going to be ill. A line from anybody in your house will much oblige us. I feel for the situation this trouble places you in.

Can I go to her aunt, or do anything? I do not know what to offer. We are in great distress. Pray relieve us, if you can, by somehow letting us know. I will fetch her here, or anything. Your kindness can never be forgot. Pray excuse my abruptness. I hardly know what I write. And take our warmest thanks. Hoping to hear something, I remain, dear Madam,

Yours most faithfully,
C. LAMB.

Our grateful respects to Mr. Williams.

LETTER 479

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. WILLIAMS

Enfield, 1 March, 1830.

DEAR Madam,—We cannot thank you enough. Your two words "much better" were so considerate and good. The good news affected my sister to an agony of tears; but they have relieved us from such a weight. We were ready to expect the worst, and were hardly able to bear the good hearing. You speak so kindly of her, too, and think she may be able to resume her duties. We were prepared, as far as our humble means would have enabled us, to have taken her from all duties. But, far better for the dear girl it is that she should have a prospect of being useful.

I am sure you will pardon my writing again; for my heart is so full, that it was impossible to refrain. Many thanks for your offer to write again, should any change take place. I dare not yet be quite out of fear, the alteration has been so sudden. But I will hope you will have a respite from the trouble of writing again. I know no expression to convey a sense of your kindness. We were in such a state expecting the post. I had almost resolved to come as near you as Bury; but my sister's health does not permit my absence on melancholy occasions. But, O, how happy will she be to part with me, when I shall hear the agreeable news that I may come and fetch her. She shall be as quiet as possible. No restorative means shall be wanting to restore her back to you well and comfortable.

She will make up for this sad interruption of her young friend's studies. I am sure she will—she must—after you have spared her for a little time. Change of scene may do very much for her. I think this last proof of your kindness to her in her desolate state can hardly make her love and respect you more than she has ever done. O, how glad shall we be to return her fit for her occupation. Madam, I trouble you with my nonsense; but you would forgive me, if you knew how light-hearted you have made two poor souls at Enfield, that were gasping for news of their poor friend. I will pray for you and Mr. Williams. Give our very best respects to him, and accept our thanks. We are happier than we hardly know how to bear. God bless you! My very kindest congratulations to Miss Humphreys.

Believe me, dear Madam,

Your ever obliged servant,

C. Lamb.

LETTER 480

CHARLES LAMB TO SARAH HAZLITT

March 4th, 1830.

DEAR Sarah,—I was meditating to come and see you, but I am unable for the walk. We are both very unwell, and under affliction for poor Emma, who has had a very dangerous brain fever, and is lying very ill at Bury, from whence I expect a summons to fetch her. We are very sorry for your confinement. Any books I have are at your service. I am almost, I may say *quite*, sure that letters to India pay no postage, and may go by the regular Post Office, now in St. Martin's le Grand. I think any receiving house would take them—

I wish I could confirm your hopes about Dick Norris. But it is quite a dream. Some old Bencher of his surname is made *Treasurer* for the year, I suppose, which is an annual office. Norris was Sub-Treasurer, quite a different thing. They were pretty well in the Summer, since when we have heard nothing of them. Mrs. Reynolds is better than she has been for years; she is with a disagreeable woman that she has taken a mighty fancy to out of spite to a rival woman she used to live and quarrel with; she grows quite *fat*, they tell me, and may live as long as I do, to be a tormenting rent-charge to my diminish'd income. We go on pretty comfortably in our new plan. I will come and have a talk with you when poor Emma's affair is settled, and will bring books. At

present I am weak, and could hardly bring my legs home yesterday after a much shorter stroll than to Northaw. Mary has got her bonnet on for a short expedition. May you get better, as the Spring comes on. She sends her best love with mine.

C. L.

NOTE

[Addressed to "Mrs. Hazlitt, Mrs. Tomlinson's, Northaw, near Potter's Bar, Herts."

Mrs. Hazlitt was in later years a sufferer from rheumatism. Dick Norris was the son of Randal Norris (see Letter 386). He had retired to Widford. Mrs. Reynolds, Lamb's old schoolmistress and dependant, we have met.]

LETTER 481

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. WILLIAMS

Enfield, 5 Mar., 1830.

DEAR Madam,—I feel greatly obliged by your letter of Tuesday, and should not have troubled you again so soon, but that you express a wish to hear that our anxiety was relieved by the assurances in it. You have indeed given us much comfort respecting our young friend, but considerable uneasiness respecting your own health and spirits, which must have suffered under such attention. Pray believe me that we shall wait in quiet hope for the time when I shall receive the welcome summons to come and relieve you from a charge, which you have executed with such tenderness. We desire nothing so much as to exchange it with you. Nothing shall be wanting on my part to remove her with the best judgment I can, without (I hope) any necessity for depriving you of the services of your valuable housekeeper. Until the day comes, we entreat that you will spare yourself the trouble of writing, which we should be ashamed to impose upon you in your present weak state. Not hearing from you, we shall be satisfied in believing that there has been no relapse. Therefore we beg that you will not add to your troubles by unnecessary, though *most kind*, correspondence. Till I have the pleasure of thanking you personally, I beg you to accept these written acknowledgments of all your kindness. With respects to Mr. Williams and sincere prayers for both your healths, I remain,

Your ever obliged servant,

C. LAMB.

My sister joins me in respects and thanks.

LETTER 482

CHARLES LAMB TO JAMES GILLMAN

March 8th, 1830.

MY dear G.,—Your friend Battin (for I knew him immediately by the smooth satinity of his style) must excuse me for advocating the cause of his friends in Spitalfields. The fact is, I am retained by the Norwich people, and have already appeared in their paper under the signatures of "Lucius Sergius," "Bluff," "Broad-Cloth," "No-Trade-to-the-Woollen-Trade," "Anti-plush," &c., in defence of druggets and long camblets. And without this pre-engagement, I feel I should naturally have chosen a side opposite to ——, for in the silken seemingness of his nature there is that which offends me. My flesh tingles at such caterpillars. He shall not crawl me over. Let him and his workmen sing the old burthen,

"Heigh ho, ye weavers!"

for any aid I shall offer them in this emergency. I was over Saint Luke's the other day with my friend Tuthill, and mightily pleased with one of his contrivances for the comfort and amelioration of the students. They have double cells, in which a pair may lie feet to feet horizontally, and chat the time away as rationally as they can. It must certainly be more sociable for them these warm raving nights. The right-hand truckle in one of these friendly recesses, at present vacant, was preparing, I understood, for Mr. Irving. Poor fellow! it is time he removed from Pentonville. I followed him as far as to Highbury the other day, with a mob at his heels, calling out upon Ermigiddon, who I suppose is some Scotch moderator. He squinted out his favourite eye last Friday, in the fury of possession, upon a poor woman's shoulders that was crying matches, and has not missed it. The companion truck, as far as I could measure it with my eye, would conveniently fit a person about the length of Coleridge, allowing for a reasonable drawing up of the feet, not at all painful. Does he talk of moving this quarter? You and I have too much sense to trouble ourselves with revelations; marry, to the same in Greek you may have something professionally to say. Tell C. that he was to come and see us some fine day. Let it be before he moves, for in his new quarters he will necessarily be confined in his conversation to his brother prophet. Conceive the two Rabbis foot to foot, for there are no Gamaliels there to affect a humbler posture! All are masters in that Patmos, where the law is perfect equality—Latmos, I should rather say, for they will be

Luna's twin darlings; her affection will be ever at the full. Well; keep *your* brains moist with gooseberry this mad March, for the devil of exposition seeketh dry places. C. L.

NOTE

[The letter is assigned to the Rev. James Gillman by some editors; but I think that a mistake. See the reference below to a medical matter. Who Battin was I know not; but he seems to have been interested in the Spitalfields weavers to the detriment of the Norwich.

"Heigh ho, ye weavers!" In "The Two Noble Kinsmen," Act II., Scene 3, we have—

> Ha, boys, heigh for the weavers!

Weavers proverbially sang at their work.

Tuthill, whom we have met, was one of the physicians at St. Luke's Hospital for the insane.

"He squinted out . . ." Irving had sight only in one eye, an obliquity caused, it is suggested, by lying when a baby in a wooden cradle, the sides of which prevented the other from gathering light.

"To the same in Greek." An atrocious pun, which I leave to the reader to discover. Gillman was a doctor.

"Latmos" — the mountain where Endymion was visited by Diana, or Luna.]

LETTER 483

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM AYRTON

Mr. Westwood's, Chase Side, Enfield,
14th March, 1830.

MY dear Ayrton,—Your letter, which was only not so pleasant as your appearance would have been, has revived some old images; Phillips (not the Colonel), with his few hairs bristling up at the charge of a revoke, which he declares impossible; the old Captain's significant nod over the right shoulder (was it not?); Mrs. Burney's determined questioning of the score, after the game was absolutely gone to the devil, the plain but hospitable cold boiled-beef suppers at sideboard; all which fancies, redolent of middle age and strengthful spirits, come across us ever and anon in this vale of deliberate senectitude, ycleped Enfield.

You imagine a deep gulf between you and us; and there is a

pitiable hiatus in *kind* between St. James's Park and this extremity of Middlesex. But the mere distance in turnpike roads is a trifle. The roof of a coach swings you down in an hour or two. We have a sure hot joint on a Sunday, and when had we better? I suppose you know that ill health has obliged us to give up housekeeping; but we have an asylum at the very next door—only twenty-four inches further from town, which is not material in a country expedition—where a *table d'hôte* is kept for us, without trouble on our parts, and we adjourn after dinner, when one of the old world (old friends) drops casually down among us. Come and find us out, and seal our judicious change with your approbation, whenever the whim bites, or the sun prompts. No need of announcement, for we are sure to be at home.

I keep putting off the subject of my answer. In truth I am not in spirits at present to see Mr. Murray on such a business; but pray offer him my acknowledgments and an assurance that I should like at least one of his propositions, as I have so much additional matter for the SPECIMENS, as might make two volumes in all, or ONE (new edition) omitting such better known authors as Beaumont and Fletcher, Jonson, &c.

But we are both in trouble at present. A very dear young friend of ours, who passed her Christmas holidays here, has been taken dangerously ill with a fever, from which she is very precariously recovering, and I expect a summons to fetch her when she is well enough to bear the journey from Bury. It is Emma Isola, with whom we got acquainted at our first visit to your sister at Cambridge, and she has been an occasional inmate with us—and of late years much more frequently—ever since. While she is in this danger, and till she is out of it, and here in a probable way to recovery, I feel that I have no spirits for an engagement of any kind. It has been a terrible shock to us; therefore I beg that you will make my handsomest excuses to Mr. Murray.

Our very kindest loves to Mrs. A. and the younger A.'s.

Your unforgotten, C. LAMB.

NOTE

["Phillips." This would be Edward Phillips, who, I think, succeeded Rickman as secretary to Abbot (afterwards Lord Colchester), the Speaker. Colonel Erasmus Phillips we have also met (see page 346). The Captain was Captain Burney.

Mr. Murray's propositions. I presume that Murray had, through Ayrton, suggested either the republication of the *Dramatic Specimens*, 1808, in one volume, or in two volumes, with the Garrick Extracts added. The plan came to nothing. Moxon published them in the two volume style in 1835.]

LETTER 484

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. WILLIAMS

[Dated at end: March 22 (1830).]

DEAR Madam,—Once more I have to return you thanks for a very kind letter. It has gladdened us very much to hear that we may have hope to see our young friend so soon, and through your kind nursing so well recovered. I sincerely hope that your own health and spirits will not have been shaken: you have had a sore trial indeed, and greatly do we feel indebted to you for all which you have undergone. If I hear nothing from you in the mean time, I shall secure myself a place in the Cornwallis Coach for Monday. It will not be at all necessary that I shall be met at Bury, as I can well find my way to the Rectory, and I beg that you will not inconvenience yourselves by such attention. Accordingly as I find Miss Isola able to bear the journey, I intend to take the care of her by the same stage or by chaises perhaps, dividing the journey; but exactly as you shall judge fit. It is our misfortune that long journeys do not agree with my sister, who would else have taken this care upon herself, perhaps more properly. It is quite out of the question to rob you of the services of any of your domestics. I cannot think of it. But if in your opinion a female attendant would be requisite on the journey, and if you or Mr. Williams would feel *more comfortable* by her being in charge of two, I will most gladly engage one of her nurses or any young person near you, that you can recommend; for my object is to remove her in the way that shall be most satisfactory to yourselves.

On the subject of the young people that you are interesting yourselves about, I will have the pleasure to talk to you, when I shall see you. I live almost out of the world and out of the sphere of being useful; but no pains of mine shall be spared, if but a prospect opens of doing a service. Could I do all I wish, and I indeed have grown helpless to myself and others, it must not satisfy the arrears of obligation I owe to Mr. Williams and yourself for all your kindness.

I beg you will turn in your mind and consider in what most comfortable way Miss Isola can leave your house, and I will implicitly follow your suggestions. What you have done for her can never be effaced from our memories, and I would have you part with her in the way that would best satisfy yourselves.

I am afraid of impertinently extending my letter, else I feel I have not said half what I would say. So, dear madam, till I have the pleasure of seeing you both, of whose kindness I have heard so

much before, I respectfully take my leave with our kindest love to your poor patient and most sincere regards for the health and happiness of Mr. Williams and yourself. May God bless you.

CH. LAMB.

Enfield, Monday, 22 March.

LETTER 485

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. WILLIAMS

Enfield, 2 Apr., 1830

DEAR Madam

I have great pleasure in letting you know that Miss Isola has suffered very little from fatigue on her long journey. I am ashamed to say that I came home rather the more tired of the two. But I am a very unpractised traveller. She has had two tolerable nights' sleeps since, and is decidedly not worse than when we left you. I remembered the Magnesia according to your directions, and promise that she shall be kept very quiet, never forgetting that she is still an invalid. We found my Sister very well in health, only a little impatient to see her; and, after a few hysterical tears for gladness, all was comfortable again. We arrived here from Epping between five and six. The incidents of our journey were trifling, but you bade me tell them. We had then in the coach a rather talkative Gentleman, but very civil, all the way, and took up a servant maid at Stamford, going to a sick mistress. To the *latter*, a participation in the hospitalities of your nice rusks and sandwiches proved agreeable, as it did to my companion, who took merely a sip of the weakest wine and water with them. The *former* engaged me in a discourse for full twenty miles on the probable advantages of Steam Carriages, which being merely problematical, I bore my part in with some credit, in spite of my totally un-engineer-like faculties. But when somewhere about Stanstead he put an unfortunate question to me as to the "probability of its turning out a good turnip season;" and when I, who am still less of an agriculturist than a steam-philosopher, not knowing a turnip from a potato ground, innocently made answer that I believed it depended very much upon boiled legs of mutton, my unlucky reply set Miss Isola a laughing to a degree that disturbed her tranquility for the only moment in our journey. I am afraid my credit sank very low with my other fellow-traveller, who had thought he had met with a *well-informed passenger*, which is an accident so desirable in a Stage Coach. We were rather less communicative, but still friendly, the rest of the way. How I

employed myself between Epping and Enfield the poor verses in the front of my paper may inform you, which you may please to Christen an Acrostic in a Cross Road, and which I wish were worthier of the Lady they refer to. But I trust you will plead my pardon to her on a subject so delicate as a Lady's good *name*. Your candour must acknowledge that they are written *strait*. And now dear Madam, I have left myself hardly space to express my sense of the friendly reception I found at Fornham. Mr. Williams will tell you that we had the pleasure of a slight meeting with him on the road, where I could almost have told him, but that it seemed ungracious, that such had been your hospitality, that I scarcely missed the good Master of the Family at Fornham, though heartily I should [have] rejoiced to have made a little longer acquaintance with him. I will say nothing of our deeper obligations to both of you, because I think we agreed at Fornham, that gratitude may be over-exacted on the part of the obliging, and over-expressed on the part of the obliged, person. My Sister and Miss Isola join in respects to Mr. Williams and yourself, and I beg to be remembered kindly to the Miss Hammonds and the two gentlemen whom I had the good fortune to meet at your house. I have not forgotten the Election in which you are interesting yourself, and the little that I can, I will do immediately. Miss Isola will have the pleasure of writing to you next week, and we shall hope, at your leisure, to hear of your own health, etc. I am, Dear Madam, with great respect,

your obliged CHARLES LAMB.

[*Added in Miss Isola's hand:*] I must just add a line to beg you will let us hear from you, my dear Mrs. Williams. I have just received the forwarded letter. Fornham we have talked about constantly, and I felt quite strange at this home the first day. I will attend to all you said, my dear Madam.

NOTE

[I do not know which of Lamb's acrostics was the one in question. Possibly this, on Mrs. Williams' youngest daughter, Louisa Clare Williams :—

Least Daughter, but not least beloved, of *Grace!*
O frown not on a stranger, who from place
Unknown and distant these few lines hath penn'd.
I but report what thy Instructress Friend
So oft hath told us of thy gentle heart.
A pupil most affectionate thou art,

Careful to learn what elder years impart.
Louisa—Clare—by which name shall I call thee?
A prettier pair of names sure ne'er was found,
Resembling thy own sweetness in sweet sound.
Ever calm peace and innocence befal thee!

See Vol. V. of this edition, pages 43, 45, 60, 61 and 94.]

LETTER 486

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. WILLIAMS

Enfield, Good Friday [April 9, 1830].

P.S.—I am the worst folder-up of a letter in the world, except certain Hottentots, in the land of Caffre, who never fold up their letters at all, writing very badly upon skins, &c.

DEAR Madam,—I do assure you that your verses gratified me very much, and my sister is quite *proud* of them. For the first time in my life I congratulated myself upon the shortness and meanness of my name. Had it been Schwartzenberg or Esterhazy, it would have put you to some puzzle. I am afraid I shall sicken you of acrostics; but this last was written *to order*. I beg you to have inserted in your county paper something like this advertisement. "To the nobility, gentry, and others, about Bury.—C. Lamb respectfully informs his friends and the public in general, that he is leaving off business in the acrostic line, as he is going into an entirely new line. Rebuses and charades done as usual, and upon the old terms. Also, Epitaphs to suit the memory of any person deceased." I thought I had adroitly escaped the rather unpliable name of "Williams," curtailing your poor daughters to their proper surnames; but it seems you would not let me off so easily. If these trifles amuse you, I am paid. Tho really 'tis an operation too much like—"A, apple-pye; B, bit it." To make amends, I request leave to lend you the "Excursion," and to recommend, in particular, the "Churchyard Stories," in the seventh book, I think. They will strengthen the tone of your mind after its weak diet on acrostics. Miss Isola is writing, and will tell you that we are going on very comfortably. Her sister is just come. She blames my last verses, as being more written on *Mr.* Williams than on yourself; but how should I have parted whom a Superior Power has brought together? I beg you will jointly accept of our best respects, and pardon your obsequious if not troublesome Correspondent, C. L.

NOTE

[Mrs. Williams' acrostic is no longer preserved. This was Lamb's effort:—

Go little Poem, and present
Respectful terms of compliment;
A gentle lady bids thee speak!
Courteous is *she*, tho' thou be weak—
Evoke from Heaven as thick as manna

Joy after joy on Grace Joanna:
On Fornham's Glebe and Pasture land
A blessing pray. Long, long may stand,
Not touched by Time, the Rectory blithe;
No grudging churl dispute his Tithe;
At Easter be the offerings due

With cheerful spirit paid; each pew
In decent order filled; no noise
Loud intervene to drown the voice,
Learning, or wisdom of the Teacher;
Impressive be the Sacred Preacher,
And strict his notes on holy page;
May young and old from age to age
Salute, and still point out, "The good man's Parsonage!"]

LETTER 487

CHARLES LAMB TO JAMES GILLMAN

[? Early Spring, 1830.]

DEAR Gillman,—Pray do you, or S. T. C., immediately write to say you have received back the golden works of the dear, fine, silly old angel, which I part from, bleeding, and to say how the Winter has used you all.

It is our intention soon, weather permitting, to come over for a day at Highgate; for beds we will trust to the Gate-House, should you be full: tell me if we may come casually, for in this change of climate there is no naming a day for walking. With best loves to Mrs. Gillman, &c.

Yours, mopish, but in health, C. LAMB.

I shall be uneasy till I hear of Fuller's safe arrival.

NOTE

[See Letter 473. The "dear, fine, silly old angel" was Thomas Fuller.]

LETTERS 488 AND 489

CHARLES LAMB TO JAMES VALE ASBURY

[? April, 1830.]

DEAR Sir—Some draughts and boluses have been brought here which we conjecture were meant for the young lady whom you saw this morning, though they are labelled for

MISS ISOLA LAMB.

No such person is known on the Chase Side, and she is fearful of

taking medicines which may have been made up for another patient. She begs me to say that she was born an *Isola* and christened *Emma*. Moreover that she is Italian by birth, and that her ancestors were from Isola Bella (Fair Island) in the kingdom of Naples. She has never changed her name and rather mournfully adds that she has no prospect at present of doing so. She is literally I. SOLA, or single, at present. Therefore she begs that the obnoxious monosyllable may be omitted on future Phials,—an innocent syllable enough, you'll say, but she has no claim to it. It is the bitterest pill of the seven you have sent her. When a lady loses her good *name*, what is to become of her? Well she must swallow it as well as she can, but begs the dose may not be repeated.

Yours faithfully, CHARLES LAMB (not Isola).

NOTE

[Asbury was a doctor at Enfield.

I append another letter to Dr. Asbury, without date :—]

CHARLES LAMB TO JAMES VALE ASBURY

DEAR Sir, It is an observation of a wise man that "moderation is best in all things." I cannot agree with him "in liquor." There is a smoothness and oiliness in wine that makes it go down by a natural channel, which I am positive was made for that descending. Else, why does not wine choke us? could Nature have made that sloping lane, not to facilitate the down-going? She does nothing in vain. You know that better than I. You know how often she has helped you at a dead lift, and how much better entitled she is to a fee than yourself sometimes, when you carry off the credit. Still there is something due to manners and customs, and I should apologise to you and Mrs. Asbury for being absolutely carried home upon a man's shoulders thro' Silver Street, up Parson's Lane, by the Chapels (which might have taught me better), and then to be deposited like a dead log at Gaffar Westwood's, who it seems does not "insure" against intoxication. Not that the mode of conveyance is objectionable. On the contrary, it is more easy than a one-horse chaise. Ariel in the "Tempest" says

> "On a Bat's back do I fly, after sunset merrily."

Now I take it that Ariel must sometimes have stayed out late of nights. Indeed, he pretends that "where the bee sucks, there lurks he," as much as to say that his suction is as innocent as that little innocent (but damnably stinging when he is provok'd) winged creature. But I take it, that Ariel was fond of metheglin, of which

the Bees are notorious Brewers. But then you will say: What a shocking sight to see a middle-aged gentleman-and-a-half riding upon a Gentleman's back up Parson's Lane at midnight. Exactly the time for that sort of conveyance, when nobody can see him, nobody but Heaven and his own conscience; now Heaven makes fools, and don't expect much from her own creation; and as for conscience, She and I have long since come to a compromise. I have given up false modesty, and she allows me to abate a little of the true. I like to be liked, but I don't care about being respected. I don't respect myself. But, as I was saying, I thought he would have let me down just as we got to Lieutenant Barker's Coal-shed (or emporium) but by a cunning jerk I eased myself, and righted my posture. I protest, I thought myself in a palanquin, and never felt myself so grandly carried. It was a slave under me. There was I, all but my reason. And what is reason? and what is the loss of it? and how often in a day do we do without it, just as well? Reason is only counting, two and two makes four. And if on my passage home, I thought it made five, what matter? Two and two will just make four, as it always did, before I took the finishing glass that did my business. My sister has begged me to write an apology to Mrs. A. and you for disgracing your party; now it does seem to me, that I rather honoured your party, for every one that was not drunk (and one or two of the ladies, I am sure, were not) must have been set off greatly in the contrast to me. I was the scapegoat. The soberer they seemed. By the way is magnesia good on these occasions? *iii* pol: med: sum: ante noct: in rub: can:. I am no licentiate, but know enough of simples to beg you to send me a draught after this model. But still you will say (or the men and maids at your house will say) that it is not a seemly sight for an old gentleman to go home pick-a-back. Well, may be it is not. But I never studied grace. I take it to be a mere superficial accomplishment. I regard more the internal acquisitions. The great object after supper is to get home, and whether that is obtained in a horizontal posture or perpendicular (as foolish men and apes affect for dignity) I think is little to the purpose. The end is always greater than the means. Here I am, able to compose a sensible rational apology, and what signifies how I got here? I have just sense enough to remember I was very happy last night, and to thank our kind host and hostess, and that's sense enough, I hope. CHARLES LAMB.

N.B.—What is good for a desperate head-ache? Why, patience, and a determination not to mind being miserable all day long. And that I have made my mind up to. So, here goes. It is better than not being alive at all, which I might have been, had your man

toppled me down at Lieut. Barker's Coal-shed. My sister sends her sober compliments to Mrs. A. She is not much the worse.

Yours truly,

C. Lamb.

Note

["Ariel." In Letter 174, on page 398, Lamb confesses similarly to a similar escapade. And in his *Elia* essay "Rejoicings on the New Year's Coming of Age," he sends Ash Wednesday home in the same manner. On page 938 will be found another letter of similar character.]

LETTER 490

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. WILLIAMS

Enfield, Tuesday [April 21, 1830].

DEAR Madam,—I have ventured upon some lines, which combine my old acrostic talent (which you first found out) with my new profession of epitaph-monger. As you did not please to say, when you would die, I have left a blank space for the date. May kind heaven be a long time in filling it up. At least you cannot say that these lines are not about you, though not much to the purpose. We were very sorry to hear that you have not been very well, and hope that a little excursion may revive you. Miss Isola is thankful for her added day; but I verily think she longs to see her young friends once more, and will regret less than ever the end of her holydays. She cannot be going on more quietly than she is doing here, and you will perceive amendment.

I hope all her little commissions will all be brought home to your satisfaction. When she returns, we purpose seeing her to Epping on her journey. We have had our proportion of fine weather and some pleasant walks, and she is stronger, her appetite good, but less wolfish than at first, which we hold a good sign. I hope Mr. Wing will approve of its abatement. She desires her very kindest respects to Mr. Williams and yourself, and wishes to rejoin you. My sister and myself join in respect, and pray tell Mr. Donne, with our compliments, that we shall be disappointed, if we do not see him.

This letter being very neatly written, I am very unwilling that Emma should club any of her disproportionate scrawl to deface it.

Your obliged servant,

C. Lamb.

NOTE

[Addressed to "Mrs. Williams, W. B. Donne, Esq., Matteshall, East Dereham, Norfolk."

Of Mr. Wing I know nothing, but Mr. Donne was William Bodham Donne (1807-1882), the friend of Edward FitzGerald, and Examiner of Plays.

This was Lamb's acrostic-epitaph on Mrs. Williams:—

Grace Joanna here doth lie:
Reader, wonder not that I
Ante-date her hour of rest.
Can I thwart her wish exprest,
Ev'n unseemly though the laugh

Jesting with an Epitaph?
On her bones the turf lie lightly,
And her rise again be brightly!
No dark stain be found upon her—
No, there will not, on mine honour—
Answer that at least I can.

Would that I, thrice happy man,
In as spotless garb might rise,
Light as she will climb the skies,
Leaving the dull earth behind,
In a car more swift than wind.
All her errors, all her failings,
(Many they were not) and ailings,
Sleep secure from Envy's railings.

Here should come an undated note from Lamb to Basil Montagu, in which Lamb asks for help for Hone in his Coffee-House. "If you can help a worthy man you will have *two worthy men* obliged to you." Hone, having fallen upon bad times, Lamb helped in the scheme to establish him in the Grasshopper Coffee-House, at 13 Grace-church Street (see next letter).]

LETTER 491

CHARLES LAMB TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

May 10, 1830.

DEAR Southey,—My friend Hone, whom you would like *for a friend*, I found deeply impressed with your generous notice of him in your beautiful "Life of Bunyan," which I am just now full of. He has written to you for leave to publish a certain good-natured letter. I write not this to enforce his request, for we are fully aware that the refusal of such publication would be quite consistent with all that is good in your character. Neither he nor

I expect it from you, nor exact it; but if you would consent to it, you would have me obliged by it, as well as him. He is just now in a critical situation: kind friends have opened a coffee-house for him in the City, but their means have not extended to the purchase of coffee-pots, credit for Reviews, newspapers, and other paraphernalia. So I am sitting in the skeleton of a possible divan. What right I have to interfere, you best know. Look on me as a dog who went once temporarily insane, and bit you, and now begs for a crust. Will you set your wits to a dog?

Our object is to open a subscription, which my friends of the "Times" are most willing to forward for him, but think that a leave from you to publish would aid it.

But not an atom of respect or kindness will or shall it abate in either of us if you decline it. Have this strongly in your mind.

Those "Every-Day" and "Table" Books will be a treasure a hundred years hence; but they have failed to make Hone's fortune.

Here his wife and all his children are about me, gaping for coffee customers; but how should they come in, seeing no pot boiling!

Enough of Hone. I saw Coleridge a day or two since. He has had some severe attack, not paralytic; but, if I had not heard of it, I should not have found it out. He looks, and especially speaks, strong. How are all the Wordsworths and all the Southeys? whom I am obliged to you if you have not brought up haters of the name of

C. Lamb.

P.S.—I have gone lately into the acrostic line. I find genius (such as I had) declines with me, but I get clever. Do you know anybody that wants charades, or such things, for Albums? I do 'em at so much a sheet. Perhaps an epigram (not a very happy-gram) I did for a school-boy yesterday may amuse. I pray Jove he may not get a flogging for any false quantity; but 'tis, with one exception, the only Latin verses I have made for forty years, and I did it "to order."

SUUM CUIQUE

Adsciscit sibi divitias et opes alienas
  Fur, rapiens, spolians, quod mihi, quod-que tibi,
Proprium erat, temnens haec verba, Meum-que, Suum-que;
  Omne suum est: tandem Cui-que Suum tribuit.
Dat laqueo collum; vestes, vah! carnifici dat;
  Sese Diabolo: sic bene: Cuique Suum.

I write from Hone's, therefore Mary cannot send her love to Mrs. Southey, but I do.

Yours ever, C. L.

NOTE

[Major's edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, mentioned in the letter to Barton on page 779, was issued in 1830 with a memoir of Bunyan by Southey. It was reviewed in *The Times* for May 7, 1830, I think probably by Lamb, in the following terms :—

The public is aware that the unexhausted diligence and unwearied pen of Mr. Southey have produced a new and excellent edition of the celebrated *Pilgrim's Progress*, with the Life of the Author prefixed. This Life is, no doubt, an interesting work, though we wish the author, both in that and in the account, which is attributed to him, of the founder of the Jesuits, contained in a recent periodical work, had taken more time. The narrative in both is hasty and tumultuary, if we may use the latter expression: there is no time or room for reflection; and when a reflection comes, it is so mixed and jambed in with the story, or with quotations from the works or words of the respective heroes of the history, that it escapes unobserved. Could we, without grievous offence, recommend, both to Mr. Southey and Sir Walter Scott, to recollect the man spoken of by Horace?—

"Etrusci
Quale fuit Cassî, rapido ferventius amni,
Ingenium, capsis quem fama est esse librisque
Ambustum propriis."—*Sat.* i., 61.

Yet still, as we said above, the Life of Bunyan is an interesting work. How different the origin of all the sects and their founders, from that of our sober, staid, and, we trust, permanent establishment, and the learned and pious reformers from whom it sprang!

But that for which we chiefly notice this work of Mr. Southey, is the very last sentence in it, wherein is contained his frank and honourable recommendation (though not more than they deserve) of the works of one whom the iron hand of oppression would have levelled with the dust:—

"In one of the volumes collected from various quarters, which were sent to me for this purpose, I observe the name of W. Hone, and notice it that I may take the opportunity of recommending his *Every-Day Book* and *Table Book* to those who are interested in the preservation of our national and local customs. By these very curious publications their compiler has rendered good service in an important department of literature; and he may render yet more, if he obtain the encouragement which he well deserves."

Not only we, and the person mentioned in this paragraph, but all the friends of pure English literature,—all the curious in old English customs,—in short, all intelligent men, with the hearts of Englishmen in them,—owe Mr. Southey their gratitude for this recommendation: it springs from a just taste and right feeling united.

Hone wrote to *The Times* at once to thank both the paper and Southey for the compliment. A few days later, on May 21, appeared an article in *The Times* containing correspondence between Hone and Southey. I quote the introduction, again probably the work of Lamb, and Southey's letter (see Lamb's letter to Hone on page 853) :—

We alluded some days ago to the handsome notice of Mr. Hone in Mr. Southey's *Life of Bunyan*. The following correspondence has since been sent to us: it displays in an advantageous light the modesty of Mr. Hone and the amiable and candid disposition of Mr. Southey. The business, wholly foreign to Mr. Hone's former pursuits, which is alluded to in the letter, is explained in an advertisement in this day's paper.

* * * * * * * * * *

"To Mr. Hone, 13, Gracechurch-Street,
"Keswick, April 26.

"SIR,—Your letter has given me both pain and pleasure. I am sorry to learn that you are still, in the worldly sense of the word, an unfortunate man,—that you are withdrawn from pursuits which were consonant to your habits and inclinations, and that a public expression of respect and good-will, made in the hope that it might have been serviceable to you, can have no such effect.

"When I observed your autograph in the little book, I wrote to inquire of Mr. Major whether it had come to his hands from you, directly or indirectly, for my use, that, in that case, I might thank you for it. It proved otherwise, but I would not lose an opportunity which I had wished for.

"Judging of you (as I would myself be judged) by your works, I saw in the editor of the *Every-Day* and *Table Books* a man who had applied himself with great diligence to useful and meritorious pursuits. I thought that time, and reflection, and affliction, (of which it was there seen that he had had his share,) had contributed to lead him into this direction, which was also that of his better mind. What alteration had been produced in his opinions it concerned not me to inquire; here there were none but what were unexceptionable,—no feelings but what were to be approved. From all that appeared, I supposed he had become 'a sadder and a wiser man:' I therefore wished him success in his literary undertakings.

"The little parcel which you mention I shall receive with pleasure.

"I wish you success in your present undertaking, whatever it be, and that you may one day, under happier circumstances, resume a pen which has, of late years, been so meritoriously employed. If your new attempt prosper, you will yet find leisure for intellectual gratification, and for that self-improvement which may be carried on even in the busiest concerns of life.

"I remain, Sir, yours with sincere good will,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

In the advertisement columns of the same issue of *The Times* (May 21) was the following notice, drawn up, I assume, by Lamb:—

THE FAMILY OF WILLIAM HONE, in the course of last winter, were kindly assisted by private friends to take and alter the premises they now reside in, No. 13, Gracechurch-street, for the purpose of a coffeehouse, to be managed by Mrs. Hone and her elder daughters; but they are in a painful exigency which increases hourly, and renders a public appeal indispensable. The wellwishers to Mr. Hone throughout the kingdom, especially the gratified readers of his literary productions (in all of which he has long ceased to have an interest, and from none of which can he derive advantage), are earnestly solicited to afford the means of completing the fittings and opening the house in a manner suited to its proposed respectability. If this aid be yielded without loss of time, it will be of indescribable benefit, inasmuch as it will put an end to many grievous anxieties and expenses, inseparable from the lengthened delay which has hitherto been inevitable, and will enable the family to immediately commence the business, which alone they look forward to for support. Subscriptions will be received by the following bankers:—Messrs. Ransom and Co., Pall-mall east; Messrs. Dixon, Sons, and Brookes, Chancery-lane; Messrs. Ladbroke and Co., Bank-buildings, Cornhill; and by Mr. Clowes, printer, 14, Charing-cross; Mr. Thomas Rodd, bookseller, 2, Great Newport-street; Mr. Griffiths, bookseller, 13, Wellington-street, Strand; Mr. Effingham Wilson, bookseller, Royal Exchange; and Messrs. Fisher and Moxhay, biscuit-bakers, 55, Threadneedle-street.

The first list of subscriptions, headed by "Charles Lamb, Esq., Enfield, £10," came to £103. This was Monday, May 31. The next list was published on June 10, accompanied by the following note in the body of the paper:—

The subscriptions for Mr. Hone, it will be perceived, are going on favourably. In the list now published is the name of the Duke of Bedford, who has sent 20*l.* His cause has been warmly espoused by the provincial journals, more than 20 of which have inserted his appeal gratuitously, with offers to receive and remit subscriptions. The aphorism, "he gives twice who gives quickly," could not receive a more cogent application than in the present instance, for the funds are required to enable Mr. Hone to commence business in his new undertaking, where he is already placed with his family, liable to rent and taxes, and other claims, but gaining nothing until his outfit is completed.

Hone, however, did not prosper, in spite of his friends, who were not sufficiently numerous to find the requisite capital.

"Suum Cuique." The boy for whom this epigram was composed was a son of Hessey, the publisher, afterwards Archdeacon Hessey. He was at the Merchant Taylors' School, where it was a custom to compose Latin and English epigrams for speech day, the boys being permitted to get help. Archdeacon Hessey wrote as follows in the *Taylorian* a few years ago:—

The subjects for 1830 were *Suum Cuique* and *Brevis esse laboro.* After some three or four exercise nights I confess that I was literally "at my wits' end." But a brilliant idea struck me. I had frequently, boy as I was, seen Charles Lamb at my father's house, and once, in 1825 or 1826, I had been taken to have tea with him and his sister, Mary Lamb, at their little house, Colebrook Cottage, a whitish-brown tenement, standing by itself, close to the New River, at Islington. He was very kind, as he always was to young people, and very quaint. I told him that I had devoured his "Roast Pig"; he congratulated me on possessing a thorough schoolboy's appetite. And he was pleased when I mentioned my having seen the boys at Christ's Hospital at their public suppers, which then took place on the Sunday evenings in Lent. "Could this good-natured and humorous old gentleman be prevailed upon to give me an Epigram?" "I don't know," said my father, to whom I put the question, "but I will ask him at any rate, and send him the mottoes." In a day or two there arrived from Enfield, to which Lamb had removed some time in 1827, not one, but two epigrams, one on each subject. That on *Suum Cuique* was in Latin, and was suggested by the grim satisfaction which had recently been expressed by the public at the capture and execution of some notorious highwayman.

See also Vol. V. of this edition for a slightly differing version. Lamb had many years before, he says in Letter 112, to Godwin, on page 281, written similar epigrams.

"With one exception." Perhaps the Latin verses on Haydon's picture. See Vol. V. page 82.]

LETTER 492

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

Enfield, Tuesday. [P.M. May 12, 1830.]

DEAR M. I dined with your and my Rogers at Mr. Cary's yesterday. Cary consulted me on the proper bookseller to offer a Lady's MS novel to. I said I would write to *you.* But I wish you would call on the Translator of Dante at the British Museum, and talk with him. He is the pleasantest of clergymen.

I told him of all Rogers's handsome behaviour to you, and you are already no stranger. Go. I made Rogers laugh about your Nightingale sonnet, not having heard one. 'Tis a good sonnet notwithstanding. You shall have the books shortly. C. L.

NOTE

[Samuel Rogers had just lent Moxon £500 on which to commence publisher.

Moxon had dedicated his first book to Rogers. This is Moxon's "Sonnet to the Nightingale," but I cannot explain why Rogers laughed :—

Lone midnight-soothing melancholy bird,
  That send'st such music to my sleepless soul,
  Chaining her faculties in fast controul,
Few listen to thy song ; yet I have heard,
When Man and Nature slept, nor aspen stirred,
  Thy mournful voice, sweet vigil of the sleeping—
And liken'd thee to some angelic mind,
  That sits and mourns for erring mortals weeping.
The genius, not of groves, but of mankind,
  Watch at this solemn hour o'er millions keeping.
  In Eden's bowers, as mighty poets tell,
Did'st thou repeat, as now, that wailing call—
  Those sorrowing notes might seem, sad Philomel,
Prophetic to have mourned of *man* the *fall*.]

LETTERS 493 AND 494

CHARLES LAMB TO VINCENT NOVELLO

Friday. [P.M. May 14, 1830.—]

DEAR Novello, Mary hopes you have not forgot you are to spend a day with us on Wednesday. That it may be a long one, cannot you secure places now for Mrs. Novello yourself and the Clarkes? We have just table room for four. Five make my good Landlady fidgetty; six, to begin to fret; seven, to approximate to fever point. But seriously we shall prefer four to two or three; we shall have from ½ past 10 to six, when the coach goes off, to scent the country. And pray write *now*, to say you do so come, for dear Mrs. Westwood else will be on the tenters of incertitude.

C. LAMB.

CHARLES LAMB TO VINCENT NOVELLO

[No date. May, 1830.]

DEAR N.—pray write immediately to say "The book has come safe." I am anxious, not so much for the autographs, as for that bit of the hair brush. I enclose a cinder, which belonged to

Shield, when he was poor, and lit his own fires. Any memorial of a great Musical Genius, I know, is acceptable; and Shield has his merits, though Clementi, in my opinion, is far above him in the Sostenuto. Mr. Westwood desires his compliments, and begs to present you with a nail that came out of Jomelli's coffin, who is buried at Naples.

NOTE

[Vincent Novello writes on this: "A very characteristic note from Dear Charles Lamb, who always pretended to Rate all kinds of memorials and *Relics*, and assumed a look of fright and horror whenever he reproached me with being a *Papist*, instead of a *Quaker*, which sect he pretended to doat upon." The book would be Novello's album, with Lamb's "Free Thoughts on Eminent Composers" in it (see Letter 496).

Shield was William Shield (1748-1829), the composer. He was buried in Westminster Abbey in the same grave as Clementi. Nicolo Jomelli (1714-1774) was a Neapolitan composer.]

LETTER 495

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM HONE

May 21, 1830.

DEAR Hone—I thought you would be pleased to see this letter. Pray if you have time to, call on Novello, No. 66, Great Queen St. I am anxious to learn whether he received his album I sent on Friday by our nine o'clock morning stage. If not, beg him inquire at the *Old Bell*, Holborn.

CHARLES LAMB.

Southey will see in the *Times* all we proposed omitting is omitted.

NOTE

[See notes to Letter 491, to Southey, above.]

LETTER 496

CHARLES LAMB TO SARAH HAZLITT

[Enfield, Saturday, May 24th, 1830.]

Mary's love? Yes. Mary Lamb quite well.

DEAR Sarah,—I found my way to Northaw on Thursday and a very good woman behind a counter, who says also that you are a very good lady but that the woman who was with you

was naught. These things may be so or not. I did not accept her offered glass of wine (home-made, I take it) but craved a cup of ale, with which I seasoned a slice of cold Lamb from a sandwich box, which I ate in her back parlour, and proceeded for Berkhampstead, &c.; lost myself over a heath, and had a day's pleasure. I wish you could walk as I do, and as you used to do. I am sorry to find you are so poorly; and, now I have found my way, I wish you back at Goody Tomlinson's. What a pretty village 'tis! I should have come sooner, but was waiting a summons to Bury. Well, it came, and I found the good parson's lady (he was from home) exceedingly hospitable.

Poor Emma, the first moment we were alone, took me into a corner, and said, "Now, pray, don't *drink;* do check yourself after dinner, for my sake, and when we get home to Enfield, you shall drink as much as ever you please, and I won't say a word about it." How I behaved, you may guess, when I tell you that Mrs. Williams and I have written acrostics on each other, and she hoped that she should have "no reason to regret Miss Isola's recovery, by its depriving *her* of our begun correspondence." Emma stayed a month with us, and has gone back (in tolerable health) to her long home, for *she* comes not again for a twelvemonth. I amused Mrs. Williams with an occurrence on our road to Enfield. We travelled with one of those troublesome fellow-passengers in a stage-coach, that is called a well-informed man. For twenty miles we discoursed about the properties of steam, probabilities of carriages by ditto, till all my science, and more than all, was exhausted, and I was thinking of escaping my torment by getting up on the outside, when, getting into Bishops Stortford, my gentleman, spying some farming land, put an unlucky question to me: "What sort of a crop of turnips I thought we should have this year?" Emma's eyes turned to me, to know what in the world I could have to say; and she burst into a violent fit of laughter, maugre her pale, serious cheeks, when, with the greatest gravity, I replied, that "it depended, I believed, upon boiled legs of mutton." This clench'd our conversation; and my Gentleman, with a face half wise, half in scorn, troubled us with no more conversation, scientific or philosophical, for the remainder of the journey. Ayrton was here yesterday, and as *learned* to the full as my fellow-traveller. What a pity that he will spoil a wit and a devilish pleasant fellow (as he is) by wisdom! He talk'd on Music; and by having read Hawkins and Burney recently I was enabled to talk of Names, and show more knowledge than he had suspected I possessed; and in the end he begg'd me to shape my thoughts upon paper, which I did after he was gone, and sent him.

FREE THOUGHTS ON SOME EMINENT COMPOSERS

Some cry up Haydn, some Mozart,
Just as the whim bites. For my part,
I do not care a farthing candle
For either of them, or for Handel.
Cannot a man live free and easy,
Without admiring Pergolesi!
Or thro' the world with comfort go
That never heard of Doctor Blow!
So help me God, I hardly have;
And yet I eat, and drink, and shave,
Like other people, (if you watch it,)
And know no more of stave and crotchet
Than did the un-Spaniardised Peruvians;
Or those old ante-queer-Diluvians
That lived in the unwash'd world with Jubal,
Before that dirty Blacksmith Tubal,
By stroke on anvil, or by summ'at,
Found out, to his great surprise, the gamut.
I care no more for Cimerosa
Than he did for Salvator Rosa,
Being no Painter; and bad luck
Be mine, if I can bear that Gluck!
Old Tycho Brahe and modern Herschel
Had something in them; but who's Purcel?
The devil, with his foot so cloven,
For aught I care, may take Beethoven;
And, if the bargain does not suit,
I'll throw him Weber in to boot!
There's not the splitting of a splinter
To chuse 'twixt *him last named*, and Winter.
Of Doctor Pepusch old queen Dido
Knew just as much, God knows, as I do.
I would not go four miles to visit
Sebastian Bach—or Batch—which is it?
No more I would for Bononcini.
As for Novello and Rossini,
I shall not say a word about [to grieve] 'em,
Because they're living. So I leave 'em.

Martin Burney is as odd as ever. We had a dispute about the word "heir," which I contended was pronounced like "air;" he said that might be in common parlance; or that we might so use it, speaking of the "Heir-at-Law," a comedy; but that in the Law Courts it was necessary to give it a full aspiration, and to say *Hayer;* he thought it might even vitiate a cause, if a Counsel pronounced it otherwise. In conclusion, he "would consult Serjeant Wilde;" who gave it against him. Sometimes he falleth into the water, sometimes into the fire. He came down here, and insisted on reading Virgil's "Eneid" all through with me (which he did,) because a Counsel must know Latin. Another time he read out all the Gospel of St. John, because Biblical quotations are very emphatic in a Court of Justice. A third time, he would carve a fowl, which he did very ill-favoredly, because "we did not know how indispensable it was for a Barrister to do all those sort of things well.

Those little things were of more consequence than we supposed." So he goes on, harassing about the way to prosperity, and losing it. With a long head, but somewhat a wrong one—harum-scarum. Why does not his guardian angel look to him? He deserves one—: may be, he has tired him out.

I am —— with this long scrawl, but I thought in your exile, you might like a letter. Commend me to all the wonders in Derbyshire, and tell the devil I humbly kiss—my hand to him. Yours ever,

C. Lamb.

Note

[Addressed to Mrs. Hazlitt at Buxton.

"Free Thoughts." The version in Ayrton's album differs a little from this, the principal difference being in line 13, "primitive" for "un-Spaniardised." Lamb's story of the origin of the verses is not necessarily correct. I fancy that he had written them for Novello before he produced them in reply to Ayrton's challenge. When sending the poem to Ayrton in a letter at this time, not available for this edition (written apparently just after Novello had paid the visit, referred to in Letter 494), Lamb wrote that it was written to gratify Novello. Mary Lamb (or Charles Lamb, personating her) appended the following postscript to the verses in Novello's album:—

The reason why my brother's so severe,
Vincentio is—my brother has no *ear*:
And Caradori her mellifluous throat
Might stretch in vain to make him learn a note.
Of common tunes he knows not anything,
Nor "Rule, Britannia" from "God save the King."
He rail at Handel! He the gamut quiz!
I'd lay my life he knows not what it is.
His spite at music is a pretty whim—
He loves not it, because it loves not him.

M. Lamb.

"Serjeant Wilde"—Thomas Wilde (1782-1855), afterwards Lord Truro, a friend of Lamb's, who is said to have helped him with squibs in the Newark election in 1829, when Martin Burney was among his supporters (see Vol. V. of this edition, page 341).]

LETTER 497

CHARLES LAMB TO SARAH HAZLITT

June 3, 1830.

DEAR Sarah,—I named your thought about William to his father, who expressed such horror and aversion to the idea of his singing in public, that I cannot meddle in it directly or

indirectly. Ayrton is a kind fellow, and if you chuse to consult him by Letter, or otherwise, he will give you the best advice, I am sure, very readily. *I have no doubt that M. Burney's objection to interfering was the same with mine.* With thanks for your pleasant long letter, which is not that of an Invalid, and sympathy for your sad sufferings, I remain, in haste,

Yours Truly.

Mary's kindest Love.

NOTE

[There was some talk of William Hazlitt Junr. becoming a pupil of Braham and taking up music seriously. He did not do so.

Here should come a note from Lamb to Hone, dated Enfield, June 17, 1830, in which Lamb offers Hone £1 per quarter for yesterday's *Times*, after the Coffee-House customers have done with it. He ends with the wish, "Vivant Coffee, Coffee-potque!"]

LETTER 498

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. June 28, 1830.]

DEAR B. B.—Could you dream of my publishing without sending a copy to you? You will find something new to you in the vol. particularly the Translations. Moxon will send to you the moment it is out. He is the young poet of Xmas, whom the Author of the Pleasures of Memory has set up in the bookvending business with a volunteer'd loan of £500—such munificence is rare to an almost stranger. But Rogers, I am told, has done many goodnatured things of this nature.

I need not say how glad to see A. K. and Lucy we should have been,—and still shall be, if it be practicable. Our direction is Mr. Westwood's, Chase Side Enfield, but alas I know not theirs. We can give them a bed. Coaches come daily from the Bell, Holborn.

You will see that I am worn to the poetical dregs, condescending to Acrostics, which are nine fathom beneath Album verses—but they were written at the request of the Lady where our Emma is, to whom I paid a visit in April to bring home Emma for a change of air after a severe illness, in which she had been treated like a daughter by the good Parson and his whole family. She has since return'd to her occupation. I thought on you in Suffolk, but was 40 miles from Woodbridge. I heard of you the other day from Mr. Pulham of the India House.

Long live King William the 4th.

S. T. C. says, we have had wicked kings, foolish kings, wise kings, good kings (but few) but never till now have we had

a Blackguard King—

Charles 2d was profligate, but a Gentleman.

I have nineteen Letters to dispatch this leisure Sabbath for Moxon to send about with Copies—so you will forgive me short measure—and believe me

Yours ever C. L.

Pray do let us see your Quakeresses if possible.

NOTE

[Lamb's *Album Verses* was almost ready. The translations were those from Vincent Bourne.

William IV. came to the throne on June 26, 1830.

"I have nineteen Letters." The fact that none of these is forthcoming helps to illustrate the imperfect state of Lamb's correspondence as (even among so many differing editions) we now have it. But of course the number may have been an exaggeration.

Here should come a note from Lamb to Hone, dated July 1, 1830, in which Lamb asks that the newspaper be kept as he is meditating a town residence (see next letter).

See also Appendix II., page 978, for a letter to Mrs. Rickman.]

LETTER 499

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

[P.M. 30 August, 1830.]

DEAR B. B.—my address is 34 Southampt^n Buildings, Holborn. For God's sake do not let me [be] pester'd with Annuals. They are all rogues who edit them, and something else who write in them. I am still alone, and very much out of sorts, and cannot spur up my mind to writing. The sight of one of those Year Books makes me sick. I get nothing by any of 'em, not even a Copy—

Thank you for your warm interest about my little volume, for the critics on which I care [? not] the 5 hundred thousandth part of the tythe of a half-farthing. I am too old a Militant for that. How noble, tho', in R. S. to come forward for an old friend, who had treated him so unworthily. Moxon has a shop without customers, I a Book without readers. But what a clamour against a poor collection of album verses, as if we had put forth an Epic. I cannot scribble a long Letter—I am, when not at foot, very desolate, and

take no interest in any thing, scarce hate any thing, but annuals. I am in an interregnum of thought and feeling—

What a beautiful Autumn morning this is, if it was but with me as in times past when the candle of the Lord shined round me—

I cannot even muster enthusiasm to admire the French heroism.

In better times I hope we may some day meet, and discuss an old poem or two. But if you'd have me not sick

no more of Annuals.

C. L. Ex-Elia.

Love to Lucy and A. K. always.

NOTE

[*The Literary Gazette*, Jerdan's paper, had written offensively of *Album Verses* and its author's vanity in the number for July 10, 1830. Southey published in *The Times* of August 6 some lines in praise of Lamb and against Jerdan. It was Southey's first public utterance on Lamb since the famous letter by Elia to himself, and is the more noble in consequence. The lines ran thus :—

TO CHARLES LAMB

On the Reviewal of his *Album Verses* in the *Literary Gazette*

Charles Lamb, to those who know thee justly dear
For rarest genius, and for sterling worth,
Unchanging friendship, warmth of heart sincere,
And wit that never gave an ill thought birth,
Nor ever in its sport infix'd a sting;
To us who have admired and loved thee long,
It is a proud as well as pleasant thing
To hear thy good report, now borne along
Upon the honest breath of public praise:
We know that with the elder sons of song
In honouring whom thou hast delighted still,
Thy name shall keep its course to after days.
The empty pertness, and the vulgar wrong,
The flippant folly, the malicious will,
Which have assailed thee, now, or heretofore,
Find, soon or late, their proper meed of shame;
The more thy triumph, and our pride the more,
When witling critics to the world proclaim,
In lead, their own dolt incapacity.
Matter it is of mirthful memory
To think, when thou wert early in the field,
How doughtily small Jeffrey ran at thee
A-tilt, and broke a bulrush on thy shield.
And now, a veteran in the lists of fame,
I ween, old Friend! thou art not worse bested
When with a maudlin eye and drunken aim,
Dulness hath thrown *a jerdan* at thy head.

SOUTHEY.

Leigh Hunt attacked Jerdan in the *Examiner* in a number of "Rejected Epigrams" signed T. A. See page 992. He also took up the matter in the *Tatler*, in the first number of which the following "Inquest Extraordinary" was printed :—

> Last week a porter died beneath his burden;
> Verdict: Found carrying a *Gazette* from Jerdan.

Moxon's shop without customers was at 64 New Bond Street.

"The candle of the Lord." See Proverbs xx. 27.

"The French heroism." The July Revolution, in which the Bourbons were routed and Louis Philippe placed on the throne.]

LETTER 500

CHARLES LAMB TO SAMUEL ROGERS

[Dated at end: Oct. 5, 1830.]

DEAR Sir,—I know not what hath bewitch'd me that I have delayed acknowledging your beautiful present. But I have been very unwell and nervous of late. The poem was not new to me, tho' I have renewed acquaintance with it. Its metre is none of the least of its excellencies. 'Tis so far from the stiffness of blank verse —it gallops like a traveller, as it should do—no crude Miltonisms in [it]. Dare I pick out what most pleases me? It is the middle paragraph in page thirty-four. It is most tasty. Though I look on every impression as a *proof* of your kindness, I am jealous of the ornaments, and should have prized the verses naked on whity-brown paper.

I am, Sir, yours truly,
C. LAMB.

Oct. 5th.

NOTE

[Rogers had sent Lamb a copy of his *Italy*, with illustrations by Turner and Stothard, which was published by Moxon with other firms in 1830. This is the middle paragraph on page 34 :—

> Here I received from thee, Basilico,
> One of those courtesies so sweet, so rare!
> When, as I rambled thro' thy vineyard-ground
> On the hill-side, thou sent'st thy little son,
> Charged with a bunch almost as big as he,
> To press it on the stranger. May thy vats
> O'erflow, and he, thy willing gift-bearer,
> Live to become a giver; and, at length,
> When thou art full of honour and wouldst rest,
> The staff of thine old age!]

LETTER 501

CHARLES LAMB TO VINCENT NOVELLO

[P.M. November 8, 1830.]

Tears are for lighter griefs. Man weeps the doom
That seals a single victim to the tomb.
But when Death riots, when with whelming sway
Destruction sweeps a family away;
When Infancy and Youth, a huddled mass,
All in an instant to oblivion pass,
And Parent's hopes are crush'd; what lamentation
Can reach the depth of such a desolation?
Look upward, Feeble Ones! look up, and trust
That He, who lays this mortal frame in dust,
Still hath the immortal Spirit in His keeping.
In Jesus' sight they are not dead, but sleeping.

DEAR N., will these lines do? I despair of better. Poor Mary is in a deplorable state here at Enfield.

Love to all, C. LAMB.

NOTE

[The four sons and two daughters of John and Ann Rigg, of York, had been drowned in the Ouse. A number of poets were asked for verses, the best to be inscribed on a monument in York Minster. Those of James Montgomery were chosen.

It was possibly the death of Hazlitt, on September 18, while the Lambs were in their London lodgings, that brought on Mary Lamb's attack.]

LETTER 502

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

November 12, 1830.

DEAR Moxon,—I have brought my sister to Enfield, being sure that she had no hope of recovery in London. Her state of mind is deplorable beyond any example. I almost fear whether she has strength at her time of life ever to get out of it. Here she must be nursed, and neither see nor hear of anything in the world out of her sick chamber. The mere hearing that Southey had called at our lodgings totally upset her. Pray see him, or hear of him at Mr. Rickman's, and excuse my not writing to him. I dare not write or receive a letter in her presence; every little task so agitates her. Westwood will receive any letter for me, and give it me privately.

Pray assure Southey of my kindliest feelings towards him; and, if you do not see him, send this to him.

Kindest remembrances to your sister, and believe me ever yours,

C. Lamb.

Remember me kindly to the Allsops.

Note

[Southey was visiting Rickman, then Clerk Assistant to the House of Commons, where he lived.]

LETTER 503

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[No date. ? Dec., 1830.]

DEAR M. Something like this was what I meant. But on reading it over, I see no great fun or use in it. It will only stuff up and encroach upon the sheet you propose. Do as, and *what*, you please. Send Proof, or not, as you like. If you send, send me a copy or 2 of the Album Verses, and the Juvenile Poetry if *bound*.

I am happy to say Mary is mending, but not enough to give me hopes of being able to leave her. I sadly regret that I shall possibly not see Southey or Wordsworth, but I dare not invite either of them here, for fear of exciting my sister, whose only chance is quiet. You don't know in what a sad state we have been.

I think the Devil may come out without prefaces, but use your discretion.

Make my kindest remembces to Southey, with my heart's thanks for his kind intent. I am a little easier about my Will, and as Ryle is Executor, and will do all a friend can do at the Office, and what little I leave will buy an annuity to piece out tolerably, I am much easier.

Yours ever C. L.

To 64 New Bond St.

Note

[I cannot say to what the opening sentences refer: probably an advertisement for *Satan in Search of a Wife* ("the Devil"), which Lamb had just written and Moxon was publishing.

The reference to the Juvenile Poetry suggests that Moxon had procured some of the sheets of the *Poetry for Children* which Godwin brought out in 1809, and was binding up a few. This

theory is borne out by the statement in the letter to Mrs. Norris, on page 914, that the book was not to be had for love or money, and the circumstance that in 1833 Lamb seems to send her a copy.

Ryle was Charles Ryle, an India House clerk, and Lamb's executor with Talfourd.]

LETTER 504

CHARLES LAMB TO GEORGE DYER

Dec. 20, 1830.

DEAR Dyer,—I would have written before to thank you for your kind letter, written with your own hand. It glads us to see your writing. It will give you pleasure to hear that, after so much illness, we are in tolerable health and spirits once more. Miss Isola intended to call upon you after her night's lodging at Miss Buffam's, but found she was too late for the stage. If she comes to town before she goes home, she will not miss paying her respects to Mrs. Dyer and you, to whom she desires best love. Poor Enfield, that has been so peaceable hitherto, has caught the inflammatory fever, the tokens are upon her! and a great fire was blazing last night in the barns and haystacks of a farmer, about half a mile from us. Where will these things end? There is no doubt of its being the work of some ill-disposed rustic; but how is he to be discovered? They go to work in the dark with strange chemical preparations unknown to our forefathers. There is not even a dark lantern to have a chance of detecting these Guy Fauxes. We are past the iron age, and are got into the fiery age, undream'd of by Ovid. You are lucky in Clifford's Inn where, I think, you have few ricks or stacks worth the burning. Pray keep as little corn by you as you can, for fear of the worst.

It was never good times in England since the poor began to speculate upon their condition. Formerly, they jogged on with as little reflection as horses: the whistling ploughman went cheek by jowl with his brother that neighed. Now the biped carries a box of phosphorus in his leather-breeches; and in the dead of night the half-illuminated beast steals his magic potion into a cleft in a barn, and half a country is grinning with new fires. Farmer Graystock said something to the touchy rustic that he did not relish, and he writes his distaste in flames. What a power to intoxicate his crude brains, just muddlingly awake, to perceive that something is wrong in the social system!—what a hellish faculty above gunpowder!

Now the rich and poor are fairly pitted; we shall see who can hang or burn fastest. It is not always revenge that stimulates these kindlings. There is a love of exerting mischief. Think of a disrespected clod that was trod into earth, that was nothing, on a sudden by damned arts refined into an exterminating angel, devouring the fruits of the earth and their growers in a mass of fire! What a new existence!—what a temptation above Lucifer's! Would clod be any thing but a clod, if he could resist it? Why, here was a spectacle last night for a whole country!—a Bonfire visible to London, alarming her guilty towers, and shaking the Monument with an ague fit—all done by a little vial of phosphor in a Clown's fob! How he must grin, and shake his empty noddle in clouds, the Vulcanian Epicure! Can we ring the bells backward? Can we unlearn the arts that pretend to civilize, and then burn the world? There is a march of Science; but who shall beat the drums for its retreat? Who shall persuade the boor that phosphor will not ignite?

Seven goodly stacks of hay, with corn-barns proportionable, lie smoking ashes and chaff, which man and beast would sputter out and reject like those apples of Asphaltes and bitumen. The food for the inhabitants of earth will quickly disappear. Hot rolls may say: "Fuimus panes, fuit quartern-loaf, et ingens gloria Apple-pasty-orum." That the good old munching system may last thy time and mine, good un-incendiary George, is the devout prayer of thine,

To the last crust, CH. LAMB.

NOTE

[Incendiarism, the result of agricultural distress and in opposition to the competition of the new machinery, was rife in the country at this time.

"*Fuimus panes* . . ." We loaves have had our day, &c. See page 456.]

LETTER 505

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[No date. ? Christmas, 1830.]

DEAR M. A thousand thanks for your punctualities. What a cheap Book is the last Hogarth you sent me! I am pleased now that Hunt *diddled* me out of the old one. Speaking of this, only think of the new farmer with his 30 acres. There is a portion of land in Lambeth parish called Knaves Acre. I wonder he overlook'd it. Don't show this to the firm of Dilk & Co. I

next want one copy of Leicester School, and wish you to pay Leishman, Taylor, 2 Blandford Place, Pall Mall, opposite the British Institution, £6. 10. for coat waistcoat &c. And I vehemently thirst for the 4th No. of Nichols's Hogarth, to bind 'em up (the 2 books) as "Hogarth, and Supplement." But as you know the price, dont stay for its appearance; but come as soon as ever you can with your bill of all demands in full, and, as I have none but £5 notes, bring with you sufficient change. Weather is beautiful. I grieve sadly for Miss Wordsworth. We are all well again. Emma is with us, and we all shall be glad of a sight of you. COME ON Sunday, if you *can;* better, if you come before. Perhaps Rogers would smile at this.—A pert half chemist half apothecary, in our town, who smatters of literature and is immeasurable unletterd, said to me "Pray, Sir, may not Hood (he of the acres) be reckon'd the Prince of wits in the present day?" to which I assenting, he adds "I had always thought that Rogers had been reckon'd the Prince of Wits, but I suppose that now Mr. Hood has the better title to that appellation." To which I replied that Mr. R. had wit with much better qualities, but did not aspire to the principality. He had taken all the puns manufactured in John Bull for our friend, in sad and stupid earnest. One more Album verses, please.

Adieu. C. L.

NOTE

["Hunt." This would, I think, be not Leigh Hunt but his nephew, Hunt of Hunt & Clarke (see page 826). The diddling I cannot explain.

Leishman was the husband of Mrs. Leishman, the Lambs' old landlady at Enfield.

"Miss Wordsworth"—Dorothy Wordsworth, who was ill.

"Perhaps Rogers would smile at this." I take the following passage from the *Maclise Portrait Gallery*:—

> In the early days of the *John Bull* it was the fashion to lay every foundling witticism at the door of Sam Rogers; and thus the refined poet and man of letters became known as a sorry jester.

John Bull was Theodore Hook's paper. Maginn wrote in *Fraser's Magazine*:—

> Joe Miller vails his bonnet to Sam Rogers; in all the newspapers, not only of the kingdom but its dependencies,—Hindostan, Canada, the West Indies, the Cape, from the tropics,—nay, from the Antipodes to the Orkneys, Sam is godfather-general to all the bad jokes in existence. The Yankees have caught the fancy, and from New Orleans to New York it is the same,—Rogers is synonymous with a pun. All British-born or descended people,—yea the very negro and the Hindoo—father their calembourgs on Rogers. Quashee, or Ramee-Samee, who knows nothing of Sir Isaac Newton, John Milton, or *Fraser's Magazine*, grins from ear to ear at the name of the illustrious banker, and with gratified voice exclaims, "Him dam funny, dat Sam!"]

LETTER 506

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. February 3, 1831.]

DEAR Moxon, The snows are ancle deep slush and mire, that 'tis hard to get to the post office, and cruel to send the maid out. 'Tis a slough of despair, or I should sooner have thankd you for your offer of the *Life*, which we shall very much like to have, and will return duly. I do not know when I shall be in town, but in a week or two at farthest, when I will come as far as you if I can. We are moped to death with confinement within doors. I send you a curiosity of G. Dyer's tender-conscience. Between 30 and 40 years since, G. published the Poet's Fate, in which were two very harmless lines about Mr. Rogers, but Mr. R. not quite approving of them, they were left out in a subsequent edition 1801. But G. has been worryting about them ever since; if I have heard him once, I have heard him a hundred times express a remorse proportiond to a consciousness of having been guilty of an atrocious libel. As the devil would have it, a fool they call *Barker*, in his Parriana has quoted the identical two lines as they stood in some obscure edition anterior to 1801, and the withers of poor G. are again wrung. His letter is a gem—with his poor blind eyes it has been laboured out at six sittings. The history of the couplet is in page 3 of this irregular production, in which every variety of shape and size that Letters can be twisted into, is to be found. Do shew *his* part of it to Mr. R. some day. If he has bowels, they must melt at the contrition so queerly character'd of a contrite sinner. G. was born I verily think without original sin, but chuses to have a conscience, as every Christian Gentleman should have. His dear old face is insusceptible of the twist they call a sneer, yet he is apprehensive of being suspected of that ugly appearance. When he makes a compliment, he thinks he has given an affront. A name is personality. But shew (no hurry) this unique recantation to Mr. R. 'Tis like a dirty pocket handkerchief muck'd with tears of some indigent Magdalen. There is the impress of sincerity in every pot-hook and hanger. And then the gilt frame to such a pauper picture! It should go into the Museum. I am heartily sorry my Devil does not answer. We must try it a little longer, and after all I think I must insist on taking a portion of the loss upon myself. It is too much you should lose by two adventures. You do not say how your general business goes on, and I should very much like to talk over it with you here. Come when the weather will possibly let you. I want to see the Wordsworths, but I do not much like

to be all night away. It is dull enough to be here together, but it is duller to leave Mary; in short it is painful, and in a flying visit I should hardly catch them. I have no beds for them, if they came down, and but a sort of a house to receive them in, yet I shall regret their departure unseen. I feel cramped and straiten'd every way. Where are they?

We have heard from Emma but once, and that a month ago, and are very anxious for another letter.

You say we have forgot your powers of being serviceable to us. *That* we never shall. I do not know what I should do without you when I want a little commission. Now then. There are left at Miss Buffam's, the Tales of the Castle, and certain vols. Retrospective Review. The first should be conveyd to Novello's, and the Reviews should be taken to Talfourd's office, ground floor, East side, Elm Court, Middle Temple, to whom I should have written, but my spirits are wretched. It is quite an effort to write this. So, with the *Life*, I have cut you out 3 Pieces of service. What can I do for you here, but hope to see you very soon, and think of you with most kindness. I fear tomorrow, between rains and snows, it would be impossible to expect you, but do not let a practicable Sunday pass. We are always at home!

Mary joins in remembrances to your sister, whom we hope to see in any fine-ish weather, when she'll venture.

Remember us to Allsop, and all the dead people—to whom, and to London, we seem dead.

NOTE

["The *Life*." The Life which every one was then reading was Moore's *Life of Byron*.

"George Dyer's." The explanation is that years before, in his *Poems*, 1801, Dyer had written in a piece called "The Poet's Fate"—

> And Rogers, if he shares the town's regard,
> Was first a banker ere he rose a bard.

In the second edition Dyer altered this to—

> And Darwin, if he share the town's regard,
> Was first a doctor ere he rose a bard.

Lamb notes the alteration in his copy of the second edition, now in the British Museum. In 1828-1829 appeared *Parriana*, by Edmund Henry Barker, which quoted the couplet in its original form, to Dyer's distress.

Tales of the Castle. By the Countess de Genlis. Translated by Thomas Holcroft.]

LETTER 507

CHARLES LAMB TO GEORGE DYER

Feb. 22nd, 1831.

DEAR Dyer,—Mr. Rogers, and Mr. Rogers's friends, are perfectly assured, that you never intended any harm by an innocent couplet, and that in the revivification of it by blundering Barker you had no hand whatever. To imagine that, at this time of day, Rogers broods over a fantastic expression of more than thirty years' standing, would be to suppose him indulging his "Pleasures of Memory" with a vengeance. You never penned a line which for its own sake you need (dying) wish to blot. You mistake your heart if you think you *can* write a lampoon. Your whips are rods of roses. Your spleen has ever had for its objects vices, not the vicious—abstract offences, not the concrete sinner. But you are sensitive, and wince as much at the consciousness of having committed a compliment, as another man would at the perpetration of an affront. But do not lug me into the same soreness of conscience with yourself. I maintain, and will to the last hour, that I never writ of you but *con amore*. That if any allusion was made to your near-sightedness, it was not for the purpose of mocking an infirmity, but of connecting it with scholar-like habits: for is it not erudite and scholarly to be somewhat near of sight, before age naturally brings on the malady? You could not then plead the *obrepens senectus*. Did I not moreover make it an apology for a certain *absence*, which some of your friends may have experienced, when you have not on a sudden made recognition of them in a casual street-meeting, and did I not strengthen your excuse for this slowness of recognition, by further accounting morally for the present engagement of your mind in worthy objects? Did I not, in your person, make the handsomest apology for absent-of-mind people that was ever made? If these things be not so, I never knew what I wrote or meant by my writing, and have been penning libels all my life without being aware of it. Does it follow that I should have exprest myself exactly in the same way of those dear old eyes of yours *now*—now that Father Time has conspired with a hard task-master to put a last extinguisher upon them? I should as soon have insulted the Answerer of Salmasius, when he awoke up from his ended task, and saw no more with mortal vision. But you are many films removed yet from Milton's calamity. You write perfectly intelligibly. Marry, the letters are not all of the same size or tallness; but that only shows your proficiency in the *hands*—text, german-hand, court-hand, sometimes law-hand, and affords

variety. You pen better than you did a twelvemonth ago; and if you continue to improve, you bid fair to win the golden pen which is the prize at your young gentlemen's academy. But you must beware of Valpy, and his printing-house, that hazy cave of Trophonius, out of which it was a mercy that you escaped with a glimmer. Beware of MSS. and Variæ Lectiones. Settle the text for once in your mind, and stick to it. You have some years' good sight in you yet, if you do not tamper with it. It is not for you (for *us* I should say) to go poring into Greek contractions, and star-gazing upon slim Hebrew points. We have yet the sight

> Of sun, and moon, and star, throughout the year,
> And man and woman.

You have vision enough to discern Mrs. Dyer from the other comely gentlewoman who lives up at staircase No. 5; or, if you should make a blunder in the twilight, Mrs. Dyer has too much good sense to be jealous for a mere effect of imperfect optics. But don't try to write the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments, in the compass of a halfpenny; nor run after a midge or a mote to catch it; and leave off hunting for needles in bushels of hay, for all these things strain the eyes. The snow is six feet deep in some parts here. I must put on jack-boots to get at the post-office with this. It is not good for weak eyes to pore upon snow too much. It lies in drifts. I wonder what its drift is; only that it makes good pancakes, remind Mrs. Dyer. It turns a pretty green world into a white one. It glares too much for an innocent colour, methinks. I wonder why you think I dislike gilt edges. They set off a letter marvellously. Yours, for instance, looks for all the world like a tablet of curious *hieroglyphics* in a gold frame. But don't go and lay this to your eyes. You always wrote hieroglyphically, yet not to come up to the mystical notations and conjuring characters of Dr. Parr. You never wrote what I call a schoolmaster's hand, like Clarke; nor a woman's hand, like Southey; nor a missal hand, like Porson; nor an all-of-the-wrong-side-sloping hand, like Miss Hayes; nor a dogmatic, Mede-and-Persian, peremptory hand, like Rickman; but you ever wrote what I call a Grecian's hand; what the Grecians write (or used) at Christ's Hospital; such as Whalley would have admired, and Boyer have applauded, but Smith or Atwood (writing-masters) would have horsed you for. Your boy-of-genius hand and your mercantile hand are various. By your flourishes, I should think you never learned to make eagles or corkscrews, or flourish the governors' names in the writing-school; and by the tenor and cut of your letters I suspect you were never in it at all. By the length of this scrawl you will think I have a design upon your optics; but I

have writ as large as I could out of respect to them—too large, indeed, for beauty. Mine is a sort of deputy Grecian's hand; a little better, and more of a worldly hand, than a Grecian's, but still remote from the mercantile. I don't know how it is, but I keep my rank in fancy still since school-days. I can never forget I was a deputy Grecian! And writing to you, or to Coleridge, besides affection, I feel a reverential deference as to Grecians still. I keep my soaring way above the Great Erasmians, yet far beneath the other. Alas! what am I now? what is a Leadenhall clerk or India pensioner to a deputy Grecian? How art thou fallen, O Lucifer! Just room for our loves to Mrs. D., &c.

C. Lamb.

Note

["I never writ of you but *con amore*." Lamb refers particularly to the *Elia* essay "Oxford in the Vacation" in the *London Magazine*, where G. D.'s absence of mind and simplicity of character were dwelt upon more intimately than Dyer liked (see Vol. II. of this edition, pages 10 and 312).

Dyer was gradually going blind through long years of study, and overwork upon James Valpy's edition of the Classics.

"*Obrepens senectus.*" Creeping on of old age.

"The Answerer of Salmasius"—Milton.

"Of sun, and moon, and star . . ." From Milton's second sonnet to Cyriack Skinner.

"Comely" Mrs. Dyer. But in the letter to Mrs. Shelley on page 739 Mrs. D. had been "plain"!

Dyer had been a Grecian before Lamb was born. Clarke would be Charles Cowden Clarke, with whose father Dyer had been an usher. For Miss Hayes see note on page 156. The Rev. Peter Whalley was Upper Grammar Master in Dyer's day; Boyer, Lamb and Coleridge's master, succeeded him in 1776. Smith was Writing Master at the end of the seventeenth century.

Lamb had never become a Grecian, having an impediment in his speech which made it impossible that he should take orders, the natural fate of Grecians, with profit. Great Erasmus and Little Erasmus are still the names of classes in the Blue-Coat School. Grecians were the Little Erasmians.

Here should come a letter from Lamb to P. G. Patmore, dated April 10, 1831, not available for this edition; in which Lamb says of the publisher of the *New Monthly Magazine*: "Nature never wrote Knave upon a face more legible than upon that fellow's —'Coal-burn him in Beelzebub's deepest pit.' I can promise little help if you mean literary, when I reflect that for 5 years I have been feeling the necessity of scribbling but have never found the power. . . . *Moxon* is my go between, call on *him*, 63 New Bond

St. he is a very good fellow and the bookseller is not yet burn'd into him." Patmore was seeking a publisher for, I imagine, his *Chatsworth* (see page 737).

Here should come a letter from Lamb, dated April 13, 1831, which Canon Ainger considers was written to Cary and Mr. Hazlitt to Coleridge. It states that Lamb is daily expecting Wordsworth.]

LETTER 508

CHARLES LAMB TO BERNARD BARTON

April 30, 1831.

VIR Bone!—Recepi literas tuas amicissimas, et in mentem venit responsuro mihi, vel raro, vel nunquam, inter nos intercedisse Latinam linguam, organum rescribendi, loquendive. Epistolæ tuæ, Plinianis elegantiis (supra quod TREMULO deceat) refertæ, tam a verbis Plinianis adeo abhorrent, ut ne vocem quamquam (Romanam scilicet) habere videaris, quam "ad canem," ut aiunt, "rejectare possis." Forsan desuetudo Latinissandi ad vernaculam linguam usitandam, plusquam opus sit, coegit. Per adagia quædam nota, et in ore omnium pervulgata, ad Latinitatis perditæ recuperationem revocare te institui.

Felis in abaco est, et ægrè videt.

Omne quod splendet nequaquam aurum putes.

Imponas equo mendicum, equitabit idem ad diabolum.

Fur commodè a fure prenditur.

O MARIA, MARIA, valdè CONTRARIA, quomodo crescit hortulus tuus?

Nunc majora canamus.

Thomas, Thomas, de Islington, uxorem duxit die nuperâ Dominicâ. Reduxit domum posterâ. Succedenti baculum emit. Postridiè ferit illam. Ægrescit illa subsequenti. Proximâ (nempe Veneris) est Mortua. Plurimum gestiit Thomas, quòd appropinquanti Sabbato efferenda sit.

Horner quidam Johannulus in angulo sedebat, artocreas quasdam deglutiens. Inseruit pollices, pruna nana evellens, et magnâ voce exclamavit "Dii boni, quàm bonus puer fio!"

Diddle-diddle-dumkins! meus unicus filius Johannes cubitum ivit, integris braccis, caligâ unâ tantum, indutus. Diddle-diddle, etc. DA CAPO.

Hic adsum saltans Joannula. Cum nemo adsit mihi, semper resto sola.

Ænigma mihi hoc solvas, et Œdipus fies.

Quâ ratione assimulandus sit equus TREMULO?

Quippe cui tota communicatio sit per HAY et NEIGH, juxta consilium illud Dominicum, "Fiat omnis communicatio vestra YEA et NAY."

In his nugis caram diem consumo, dum invigilo valetudini carioris nostræ Emmæ, quæ apud nos jamdudum ægrotat. Salvere vos jubet mecum Maria mea, ipsa integrâ valetudine.

ELIA.

Ab agro Enfeldiense datum, Aprilis nescio quibus Calendis—Davus sum, non Calendarius.

P.S.—Perdita in toto est Billa Reformatura.

NOTE

[Mr. Stephen Gwynn gives me the following translation :—

GOOD SIR, I have received your most kind letter, and it has entered my mind as I began to reply, that the Latin tongue has seldom or never been used between us as the instrument of converse or correspondence. Your letters, filled with Plinian elegancies (more than becomes a Quaker), are so alien to Pliny's language, that you seem not to have a word (that is, a Roman word) to throw, as the saying is, at a dog. Perchance the disuse of Latinising had constrained you more than is right to the use of the vernacular. I have determined to recall you to the recovery of your lost Latinity by certain well-known adages common in all mouths.

The cat's in the cupboard and she can't see.

All that glitters is not gold.

Set a beggar on horseback and he'll ride to the Devil.

Set a thief to catch a thief.

Mary, Mary, quite contrary, how does your garden grow?

Now let us sing of weightier matters.

Tom, Tom, of Islington, wed a wife on Sunday. He brought her home on Monday. Bought a stick on Tuesday. Beat her well on Wednesday. She was sick on Thursday. Dead on Friday. Tom was glad on Saturday night to bury his wife on Sunday.

Little Jack Horner sat in a corner, eating his Christmas pie. He put in his thumb and drew out a plumb and cried "Good Heavens, what a good boy am I!"

Diddle, diddle, dumkins! my son John Went to bed with his breeches on; One shoe off and the other shoe on, Diddle, diddle, etc. (Da Capo.)

Here am I, jumping Joan. When no one's by, I'm all alone.

Solve me this enigma, you shall be an Œdipus.

Why is a horse like a Quaker?

Because all his communication is by Hay and Neigh, after the Lord's counsel, "Let all your communication be Yea and Nay."

In these trifles I waste the precious day, while watching over the health of our more precious Emma, who has been sick in our house this long time. My Mary sends you greeting with me, she herself in sound health.

Given from the Enfield country seat, on I know not what Calends of April—I am Davus not an Almanac.[1]

P.S.—The Reform Bill is lost altogether.

The Reform Bill was introduced on March 1, 1831, by Lord John Russell; the second reading was carried on March 22 by a majority of 1. On its commitment on April 19 there was a majority of 8 against the Government. Four days later the Government was again defeated by 22 and Parliament was dissolved. But later, of course, the Reform Bill was passed.]

LETTER 509

CHARLES LAMB TO H. F. CARY

[Dated at end:] Datum ab agro Enfeldiensi,
Maii die sextâ, 1831.

ASSIDENS est mihi bona soror, Euripiden evolvens, donum vestrum, carissime Cary, pro quo gratias agimus, lecturi atque iterum lecturi idem. Pergratus est liber ambobus, nempe "Sacerdotis Commiserationis," sacrum opus a te ipso Humanissimæ Religionis Sacerdote dono datum. Lachrymantes gavisuri sumus; est ubi dolor fiat voluptas; nec semper dulce mihi est ridere; aliquando commutandum est he! he! he! cum heu! heu! heu!

A Musis Tragicis me non penitus abhorruisse testis sit Carmen Calamitosum, nescio quo autore linguâ prius vernaculâ scriptum, et nuperrimè a me ipso Latine versum, scilicet, "Tom Tom of Islington." Tenuistine?

"Thomas Thomas de Islington,
Uxorem duxit Die quâdam Solis,
Abduxit domum sequenti die,
Emit baculum subsequenti,
Vapulat illa posterâ,
Ægrotat succedenti, Mortua fit crastinâ."

Et miro gaudio afficitur Thomas luce posterâ quod subsequenti (nempe, Dominicâ) uxor sit efferenda.

"En Iliades Domesticas!
En circulum calamitatum!
Planè hebdomadalem tragœdiam."

I nunc et confer Euripiden vestrum his luctibus, hâc morte uxoriâ; confer Alcesten! Hecuben! quasnon antiquas Heroinas Dolorosas.

[1] Allusion to the phrase of Davus the servant in Plautus—"Davus sum non Œdipus."

Suffundor genas lachrymis, tantas strages revolvens. Quid restat nisi quod Tecum Tuam Caram salutamus ambosque valere jubeamus, nosmet ipsi bene valentes. ELIA.

NOTE

[Mr. Stephen Gwynn gives me the following translation :—

Sitting by me is my good sister, turning over Euripides, your gift, dear Cary [a pun here, "carissime care"], for which we thank you, and will read and re-read it. Most acceptable to both of us is this book of "Pity's Priest," a sacred work of your bestowing, yourself a priest of the most humane Religion. We shall take our pleasure weeping; there are times when pain turns pleasure, and I would not always be laughing: sometimes there should be a change—*heu heu!* for *he! he!*

That I have not shrunk from the Tragic Muses, witness this Lamentable Ballad, first written in the vernacular by I know not what author and lately by myself put into Latin T. T. of Islington. Have you heard it? (*See translation of preceding letter.*) And Thomas is possessed with a wondrous joy on the following morning, because on the next day, that is, Sunday, his wife must be buried.

Lo, your domestic Iliads!
Lo, the wheel of Calamities
The true tragedy of a week.

Go to now, compare your Euripides with these sorrows, this death of a wife! Compare Alcestis! Hecuba! or what not other sorrowing Heroines of antiquity.

My cheeks are tear-bedewed as I revolve such slaughter. What more to say, but to salute you Cary and your Cara, and wish you health, ourselves enjoying it.

In *Mary and Charles Lamb*, 1874, by W. C. Hazlitt, in the Catalogue of Charles Lamb's Library, for sale by Bartlett and Welford, New York, is this item :—"*Euripidis Tragediæ, interp. Lat.* 8vo. Oxonii, 1821". "C. and M. Lamb, from H. F. Cary," on flyleaf. This must be the book referred to.

Euripides has been called the priest of pity.]

LETTER 510

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. July 14, 1831.]

COLLIER'S Book would be right acceptable. And also a sixth vol. just publish'd of Nichols's Illustrations of the Literary History of 18th Century. I agree with you, and do yet *not disagree*

with W. W., as to H. It rejoyced my heart to read his friendly spirited mention of your publications. It might be a drawback to my pleasure, that he has tried to decry my "Nicky," but on deliberate re- and reperusal of his censure I cannot in the remotest degree understand what he means to say. He and I used to dispute about Hell Eternities, I taking the affirmative. I love to puzzle atheists, and—parsons. I fancy it runs in his head, that I meant to rivet the idea of a personal devil. Then about the glorious three days! there was never a year or day in my past life, since I was pen-worthy, that I should not have written precisely as I have. Logic and modesty are not among H.'s virtues. Talfourd flatters me upon a poem which "nobody but I could have written," but which I have neither seen nor heard of—"The Banquet," or "Banqueting Something," that has appeared in The Tatler. Know you of it? How capitally the Frenchman has analysed Satan! I was hinder'd, or I was about doing the same thing in English, for him to put into French, as I prosified Hood's midsummer fairies. The garden of *cabbage* escap'd him, he turns it into a garden of pot herbs. So local allusions perish in translation. About 8 days before you told me of R.'s interview with the Premier, I, at the desire of Badams, wrote a letter to him (Badams) in the most moving terms setting forth the age, infirmities &c. of Coleridge. This letter was convey'd to [by] B. to his friend Mr. Ellice of the Treasury, Brother in Law to Lord Grey, who immediately pass'd it on [to] Lord Grey, who assured him of immediate relief by a grant on the King's Bounty, which news E. communicated to B. with a desire to confer with me on the subject, on which I went up to THE Treasury (yesterday fortnight) and was received by the Great Man with the utmost cordiality, (shook hands with me coming and going) a fine hearty Gentleman, and, as seeming willing to relieve any anxiety from me, promised me an answer thro' Badams in 2 or 3 days at furthest. Meantime Gilman's extraordinary insolent letter comes out in the Times! As to *my* acquiescing in this strange step, I told Mr. Ellice (who expressly said that the thing was renewable three-yearly) that I consider'd such a grant as almost equivalent to the lost pension, as from C.'s appearance and the representations of the Gilmans, I scarce could think C.'s life worth 2 years' purchase. I did not know that the Chancellor had been previously applied to. Well, after seeing Ellice I wrote in the most urgent manner to the Gilmans, insisting on an immediate letter of acknowledgment from Coleridge, or them *in his name* to Badams, who not knowing C. had come forward so disinterestedly amidst his complicated illnesses and embarrassments, to *use up* an interest, which he may so well need, in favor of a stranger; and from that day not a letter has B. or even myself,

received from Highgate, unless *that publish'd one in the Times is meant as a general answer to all the friends who have stirr'd to do C. service!* Poor C. is not to blame, for he is in leading strings.—I particularly wish you would read this part of my note to Mr. Rogers. Now for home matters—Our next 2 Sundays will be choked up with all the Sugdens. The third will be free, when we hope you will show your sister the way to Enfield and leave her with us for a few days. In the mean while, could you not run down some week day (afternoon, say) and sleep at the Horse Shoe? I want to have my 2d vol. Elias bound Specimen fashion, and to consult you about 'em. Kenney has just assured me that he has just touch'd £100 from the theatre; you are a damn'd fool if you dont exact your Tythe of him, and with that assurance I rest

Your Brother fool C. L.

NOTE

[Collier's book would be his *History of English Dramatic Poetry*, 1831. Nichols's *Illustrations* had been begun by John Nichols, and six volumes were published between 1817 and 1831. It was completed in two more volumes by his son, John Bowyer Nichols, in 1848 and 1858.

"H."—Leigh Hunt. We do not know what W. W., presumably Wordsworth, had to say of him; but this is how Hunt had referred to Moxon's publications and Lamb's *Satan in Search of a Wife* in *The Tatler* for June 4, 1831, the occasion being a review of "Selections from Wordsworth" for schools:—

Mr. Moxon has begun his career as a bookseller in singularly high taste. He has no connection but with the select of the earth. The least thing he does, is to give us a dandy poem, suitable to Bond street, and not without wit. We allude to the Byronian brochure, entitled "*Mischief*." But this is a mere condescension to the elegance of the street he lives in. Mr. Moxon commenced with some of the primæval delicacies of *Charles Lamb*. He then astonished us with Mr. Rogers' poems on *Italy*. . . . Of some of these publications we have already spoken,—Mr. Lamb's *Album Verses* among them. And why (the reader may ask) not have noticed his *Satan in Search of a Wife?* Because, to say the truth, we did not think it worthy of him. We rejoice in Mr. Lamb's accession to the good cause advocated by Sterne and Burns, refreshed by the wholesome mirth of Mr. Moncrieff, and finally carried (like a number of other astonished humanities, who little thought of the matter, and are not all sensible of it now) on the triumphant shoulders of the Glorious Three Days. But Mr. Lamb, in the extreme sympathy of his delight, has taken for granted, that everything that can be uttered on the subject will be held to be worth uttering, purely for its own sake, and because it could not well have been said twelve months ago. He merges himself, out of the pure transport of his good will, into the joyous common-places of others; just as if he had joined a great set of children in tossing over some mighty bowl of snap-dragon, too scalding to bear; and thought that nothing could be so good as to echo their "hurras!" Furthermore, we fear that some of his old friends, on the wrong side of the *House*, would think a little of his merriment profane: though for our parts, if we are certain of anything in this world, it is that nothing can be more Christian.

"The Banquet." I cannot find this poem. It is, I think, not in *The Tatler*.

"How capitally the Frenchman . . ." I cannot find any French paraphrase of *Satan in Search of a Wife*, nor has a search at the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris revealed one.

"R.'s interview with the Premier." R. would be Rogers. Perhaps the best explanation of this portion of Lamb's letter is the following passage from Mr. Dykes Campbell's memoir of Coleridge:—

On June 26, 1830, died George IV., and with him died the pensions of the Royal Associates. Apparently they did not find this out until the following year. In the *Englishman's Magazine* for June 1831, attention was directed to the fact that "intimation had been given to Mr. Coleridge and his brother Associates that they must expect their allowances 'very shortly' to cease"—the allowances having been a personal bounty of the late King. On June 3, 1831, Gillman wrote a letter to the *Times*, "in consequence of a paragraph which appeared in the *Times* of this day." He states that on the sudden suppression of the honorarium, representations on Coleridge's behalf were made to Lord Brougham, with the result that the Treasury (Lord Grey) offered a private grant of £200, which Coleridge "had felt it his duty most respectfully to decline." Stuart, however, wrote to King William's son, the Earl of Munster, pointing out the hardship entailed on Coleridge, "who is old and infirm, and without other means of subsistence." He begs the Earl to lay the matter before his royal father. To this a reply came, excusing the King on account of his "very reduced income," but promising that the matter shall be laid before His Majesty. To these letters, which are printed in *Letters from the Lake Poets* (pages 319-322), the following note is appended: "The annuity . . . was not renewed, but a sum of £300 was ultimately handed over to Coleridge by the Treasury." Even apart from this bounty, Coleridge was not a sufferer by the withdrawal of the King's pension, for Frere made it up to him annually.

It is interesting to know that Lamb played so useful and characteristic a part in this matter.

"The Sugdens." I do not identify these friends.

"2d vol. Elias." This would refer, I think, to the American volume, published without authority, in 1828, under the title *Elia; or, Second Series*, which Lamb told N. P. Willis he liked. It contained three pieces not by Lamb; the rest made up from the *Works* and the *London Magazine* (see Vol. II., page 301).]

LETTER 511

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

Pray forward the enclosed, or put it in the post.

[No date. Early August, 1831.]

DEAR M.—The *R.A.* here memorised was George Dawe, whom I knew well and heard many anecdotes of, from DANIELS and WESTALL, at H. Rogers's—*to each of them* it will be well to send

a Mag. in my name. It will fly like wild fire among the R. Academicians and artists. Could you get hold of Proctor—his chambers are in Lincoln's Inn at Montagu's—or of Janus Weathercock?—both of their *prose* is capital. Don't encourage poetry. The Peter's Net does not intend funny things only. All is fish. And leave out the sickening Elia at the end. Then it may comprise letters and characters addrest to Peter—but a signature forces it to be all characteristic of the one man Elia, or the one man Peter, which cramped me formerly. I have agreed *not* for my sister to know the subjects I chuse till the Mag. comes out; so beware of speaking of 'em, or writing about 'em, save generally. Be particular about this warning. Can't you drop in some afternoon, and take a bed?

The *Athenæum* has been hoaxed with some exquisite poetry that was 2 or 3 months ago in Hone's Book. I like your 1st No. capitally. But is it not small? Come and see us, week day if possible. C. L.

NOTE

[Moxon had just acquired *The Englishman's Magazine* and Lamb contributed to the September number his "Recollections of a Late Royal Academician," George Dawe (see Vol. I. of this edition, page 331), under the general title "Peter's Net." Daniels may have been Thomas or William Daniell, both landscape painters. Westall may have been Richard Westall, the historical painter, or William Westall, the topographical painter. H. Rogers was Henry Rogers, brother of the poet.

"The *Athenæum* has been hoaxed." The exquisite poetry was FitzGerald's "Meadows in Spring" (see next letter).]

LETTER 512

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. Aug. 5, 1831.]

SEND, or bring me, Hone's No. for August.

Hunt is a fool, and his critics——The anecdotes of E. and G. D. are substantially true. What does Elia (or Peter) care for dates?

That *is* the poem I mean. I do not know who wrote it, but is in Hone's book as far back as April.

Tis a poem I envy—*that* & Montgomery's Last Man (nothing else of his). I envy the writers, because I feel I could have done something like it. S—— is a coxcomb. W—— is a ——— —— & a great Poet. L.

NOTE

[Hone was now editing his *Year Book*. Under the date April 30 had appeared Edward FitzGerald's poem, "The Meadows in Spring," with the following introduction:—

> These verses are in the old style; rather homely in expression; but I honestly profess to stick more to the simplicity of the old poets than the moderns, and to love the philosophical good humor of our old writers more than the sickly melancholy of the Byronian wits. If my verses be not good, they are good humored, and that is something.

The editor of *The Athenæum*, in reprinting the poem, suggested delicately that it was by Lamb. There is no such poem by James Montgomery as "The Last Man." Campbell wrote a "Last Man," and so did Hood, but I agree with Canon Ainger that what Lamb meant was Montgomery's "Common Lot." I give the two poems in the Appendix (see pages 960 and 961) as illustrations of what Lamb envied.

"Hunt is a fool." In *The Tatler* for August 1 Leigh Hunt had quoted much of Lamb's essay on Elliston. I do not, however, find any adverse criticism.

"E. and G. D." Lamb had written in the August number of *The Englishman's Magazine* his "Reminiscences of Elliston." Lamb's article on George Dawe did not appear till the September number, but perhaps Moxon already had the copy.]

LETTER 513

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. Sept. 5, 1831.]

DEAR M., Your Letter's contents pleased me. I am only afraid of taxing you, yet I want a stimulus, or I think I should drag sadly. I shall keep the monies in trust till I see you fairly over the next 1 January. Then I shall look upon 'em as earned. Colburn shall be written to. No part of yours gave me more pleasure (no, not the £10, tho' you may grin) than that you will revisit old Enfield, which I hope will be always a pleasant idea to you.

Yours very faithfully
C. L.

NOTE

[The letter's contents was presumably payment for Lamb's contribution to *The Englishman's Magazine*.]

LETTER 514

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM HAZLITT, JR.

[P.M. Sept. 13, 1831.]

DEAR Wm—We have a sick house, Mrs. Westwds daughter in a fever, & Grandaughter in the meazles, & it is better to see no company just now, but in a week or two we shall be very glad to see you; come at a hazard then, on a week day if you can, because Sundays are stuffd up with friends on both parts of this great ill-mix'd family. Your second letter, dated 3d Septr., came not till Sundy & we staid at home in evens in expectation of seeing you. I have turned & twisted what you ask'd me to do in my head, & am obliged to say I can not undertake it—but as a composition for declining it, will you accept some verses which I meditate to be addrest to you on your father, & prefixable to your Life? Write me word that I may have 'em ready against I see you some 10 days hence, when I calculate the House will be uninfected. Send your mother's address.

If you are likely to be again at Cheshunt before that time, on second thoughts, drop in here, & consult—

Yours,
C. L.

Not a line is yet written—so say, if I shall do 'em.

NOTE

[This is the only letter extant to the younger Hazlitt, who was then nearly twenty. William Hazlitt, the essayist, had died September 18, 1830. Lamb was at his bedside. The memoir of him, by his son, was prefixed to the *Literary Remains* in 1836, but no verses by Lamb accompanied it. When this letter was last sold at Sotheby's in June, 1902, a copy of verses was attached beginning—

There lives at Winterslow a man of such
Rare talents and deep learning . . .

in the handwriting of William Hazlitt. They bear more traces of being Mary Lamb's work than her brother's.]

LETTER 515

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. October 24, 1831.]

TO address an abdicated monarch is a nice point of breeding. To give him his lost titles is to mock him; to withhold 'em is to wound him. But his Minister who falls with him may be

gracefully sympathetic. I do honestly feel for your diminution of honors, and regret even the pleasing cares which are part and parcel of greatness. Your magnanimous submission, and the cheerful tone of your renunciation, in a Letter which, without flattery, would have made an "ARTICLE," and which, rarely as I keep letters, shall be preserved, comfort me a little. Will it please, or plague you, to say that when your Parcel came I damned it, for my pen was warming in my hand at a ludicrous description of a Landscape of an R.A., which I calculated upon sending you to morrow, the last day you gave me. Now any one calling in, or a letter coming, puts an end to my writing for the day. Little did I think that the mandate had gone out, so destructive to my occupation, so relieving to the apprehensions of the whole body of R.A.'s. So you see I had not quitted the ship while a plank was remaining.

To drop metaphors, I am sure you have done wisely. The very spirit of your epistle speaks that you have a weight off your mind. I have one on mine. The cash in hand, which, as * * * * * * less truly says, burns in my pocket. I feel queer at returning it (who does not?). You feel awkward at re-taking it (who ought not?) Is there no middle way of adjusting this fine embarrassment? I think I have hit upon a medium to skin the sore place over, if not quite to heal it. You hinted that there might be something under £10 by and by accruing to me *Devil's Money*. You are sanguine—say £7: 10s.—that I entirely renounce and abjure all future interest in, I insist upon it, and "by Him I will not name" I won't touch a penny of it. That will split your Loss one half—and leave me conscientious possessor of what I hold. Less than your assent to this, no proposal will I accept of.

The Rev. Mr. ——, whose name you have left illegible (is it *Seagull?*) never sent me any book on Christ's Hospit. by which I could dream that I was indebted to him for a dedication. Did G. D. send his penny tract to me to convert me to Unitarianism? Dear blundering soul! why I am as old a one-Goddite as himself. Or did he think his cheap publication would bring over the Methodists over the way here? However I'll give it to the pew-opener (in whom I have a little interest,) to hand over to the Clerk, whose wife she sometimes drinks tea with, for him to lay before the Deacon, who exchanges the civility of the hat with him, for him to transmit to the Minister, who shakes hand with him out of Chapel, and he, in all odds, will ———— with it.

I wish very much to see you. I leave it to you to come how you will. We shall be very glad (we need not repeat) to see your sister, or sisters, with you—but for you individually I will just hint that a dropping in to Tea unlook'd for about 5, stopping bread-n-cheese and gin-and-water, is worth a thousand Sundays. I am naturally

miserable on a Sunday, but a week day evening and Supper is like old times. Set out *now*, and give no time to deliberation—

P.S.—The 2d vol. of Elia is delightful(-ly bound, I mean) and quite cheap. Why, man, 'tis a Unique—

If I write much more I shall expand into an article, which I cannot afford to let you have so cheap.

By the by, to shew the perverseness of human will—while I thought I *must* furnish one of those accursed things monthly, it seemed a Labour above Hercules's "Twelve" in a year, which were evidently Monthly Contributions. Now I am emancipated, I feel as if I had a thousand Essays swelling within me. False feelings both.

I have lost Mr. Aitken's Town address—do you know it? Is he there?

Your ex-Lampoonist, or Lamb-punnist—from Enfield, Oct. 24, or "last day but one for receiving articles that can be inserted."

NOTE

[Moxon, finding *The Englishman's Magazine* unsuccessful, gave it up suddenly after the October number, the third under his direction. His letter to Lamb on the subject is not now forthcoming. The ludicrous description of a landscape by an R.A. is, I imagine, that of the garden of the Hesperides in the *Elia* essay on the "Barrenness of the Imaginative Faculty in the Production of Modern Art" (see Vol. II., page 227). Probably Turner's "Garden of the Hesperides" in the National Gallery.

By "Devil's Money" Lamb means money due for *Satan in Search of a Wife.* I do not identify * * * * * *.

"By Him I will not name." An allusion probably to the Jewish habit of avoiding Jehovah's name in their synagogues.

"The Rev. Mr. ——." I have not identified this gentleman.

"G. D. . . . penny tract." I have not found Dyer's tract.

"The 2d vol. of Elia." See note on page 877.

"Mr. Aitken." John Aitken, editor of *Constable's Miscellany*, whom Moxon would have known at Hurst & Co.'s. See page 974

LETTER 516

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. Dec. 15, 1831.]

DEAR M. †S. I know, has an aversion, amounting almost to horror, of H. He *would not* lend his name. The other I might wring a guinea from, but he is *very properly* shy of

his guineas. It would be improper in me to apply to him, and impertinent to the other. I hope this will satisfy you, but don't give my reason to H.'s friend, simply, say I decline it.

I am very much obliged to you for thinking of Cary. Put me down seven shillings (wasn't it?) in your books, and I set you down for more in my good ones. One Copy will go down to immortality *now*, the more lasting as the less its leaves are disturbed. This Letter will cost you 3d.—but I did not like to be silent on the above †.

Nothing with my name will sell, a blast is upon it. Do not think of such a thing, unless ever you become rich enough to speculate.

Being praised, and being bought, are different things to a Book. Fancy books sell from fashion, not from the number of their real likers. Do not come at so long intervals. Here we are sure to be.

NOTE

[S. and H. I do not identify—perhaps Southey and Hunt. Hunt's need of guineas was chronic. The reference to Cary is not very clear. Lamb seems to suggest that he is giving Cary a copy of a book that Cary will not read, but will preserve.

"Nothing with my name." Moxon may perhaps have just suggested publishing a second series of *Elia*.]

LETTER 517

CHARLES LAMB TO JOSEPH HUME'S DAUGHTERS

[No date. 1832.]

MANY thanks for the wrap-rascal, but how delicate the insinuating in, into the pocket, of that 3½*d*., in paper too! Who was it? Amelia, Caroline, Julia, Augusta, or "Scots who have"?

As a set-off to the very handsome present, which I shall lay out in a pot of ale certainly to *her* health, I have paid sixpence for the mend of two button-holes of the coat now return'd. She shall not have to say, "I don't care a button for her."

Adieu, très aimables!

Buttons	6d.
Gift	3½
Due from ——	2½

which pray accept . . . from your foolish coatforgetting C. L.

NOTE

[For Joseph Hume see the note to Letter 205, page 455. Mr. Hazlitt writes: "Amelia Hume became Mrs. Bennett, Julia Mrs. Todhunter. The latter personally informed me in 1888 that her Aunt Augusta perfectly recollected all the circumstances [of the present note]. The incident seems to have taken place at the residence of Mr. Hume, in Percy Street, Bloomsbury, and it was Amelia who found the threepence-halfpenny in the coat which Lamb left behind him, and who repaired the button-holes. The sister who is described as 'Scots wha ha'e' was Louisa Hume; it was a favourite song with her." Mrs. Todhunter supplied the date, 1832.]

LETTER 518

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES WENTWORTH DILKE

[P.M. March 5, 1832.]

DR Sir, My friend Aders, a German merchant, German born, has opend to the public at the Suffolk St. Gallery his glorious Collection of old Dutch and German Pictures. Pray see them. You have only to name my name, and have a ticket—if you have not received one already. You will possibly notice 'em, and might lug in the inclosed, which I wrote for Hone's Year Book, and has appear'd only there, when the Pictures were at home in Euston Sq. The fault of this matchless set of pictures is, *the admitting a few Italian pictures with 'em*, which I would turn out to make the Collection unique and pure. Those old Albert Durers have not had their fame. I have tried to illustrate 'em. If you print my verses, a Copy, please, for me.

NOTE

[The first letter to Charles Wentworth Dilke (1789-1864), a friend of Keats, Hunt and Hood, editor of Dodsley and now editor of *The Athenæum*. Lamb's verses ran thus:—

TO C. ADERS, ESQ.

On his Collection of Paintings by the old German Masters

Friendliest of men, Aders, I never come
Within the precincts of this sacred Room,
But I am struck with a religious fear,
Which says "Let no profane eye enter here."
With imagery from Heav'n the walls are clothed,
Making the things of Time seem vile and loathed.

Spare Saints, whose bodies seem sustain'd by Love
With Martyrs old in meek procession move.
Here kneels a weeping Magdalen, less bright
To human sense for her blurr'd cheeks; in sight
Of eyes, new-touch'd by Heaven, more winning fair
Than when her beauty was her only care.
A Hermit here strange mysteries doth unlock
In desart sole, his knees worn by the rock.
There Angel harps are sounding, while below
Palm-bearing Virgins in white order go.
Madonnas, varied with so chaste design,
While all are different, each seems genuine,
And hers the only Jesus: hard outline,
And rigid form, by Dürer's hand subdued
To matchless grace, and sacro-sanctitude;
Dürer, who makes thy slighted Germany
Vie with the praise of paint-proud Italy.

Whoever enter'st here, no more presume
To name a Parlour, or a Drawing Room;
But, bending lowly to each, holy Story,
Make this thy Chapel, and thine Oratory.]

LETTER 519

CHARLES LAMB TO S. T. COLERIDGE

April 14th, 1832.

MY dear Coleridge,—Not an unkind thought has passed in my brain about you. But I have been wofully neglectful of you, so that I do not deserve to announce to you, that if I do not hear from you before then, I will set out on Wednesday morning to take you by the hand. I would do it this moment, but an unexpected visit might flurry you. I shall take silence for acquiescence, and come. I am glad you could write so long a letter. Old loves to, and hope of kind looks from, the Gilmans, when I come.

Yours *semper idem* C. L.

If you ever thought an offence, much more wrote it, against me, it must have been in the times of Noah; and the great waters swept it away. Mary's most kind love, and maybe a wrong prophet of your bodings!—here she is crying for mere love over your letter. I wring out less, but not sincerer, showers.

My direction is simply, Enfield.

NOTE

[Mr. Dykes Campbell's comment upon this note is that it was written to remove some mistaken sick-man's fancy.]

LETTER 520

CHARLES LAMB TO JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES

[No date. ? April, 1832.]

DEAR Kn.—I will not see London again without seeing your pleasant Play. In meanwhile, pray, send three or four orders to a Lady who can't afford to pay: Miss James, No. 1 Grove Road, Lisson Grove, Paddington, a day or two before—and come and see us some *Evening* with my hitherto uncorrupted and honest bookseller

Moxon. C. LAMB.

NOTE

[I have dated this April, 1832, because it may refer to Knowles' play "The Hunchback," produced April 5, 1832. It might also possibly refer to "The Wife" of a year later, but I think not.]

LETTER 521

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN FORSTER

[? Late April, 1832.]

One day in my life
Do come. C. L.

I HAVE placed poor Mary at Edmonton—

I shall be very glad to see the Hunch Back and Straitback the 1st Eveng they can come. I am very poorly indeed. I have been cruelly thrown out. Come and don't let me drink too much. I drank more yesterday than I ever did any one day in my life

C. L.

Do come.

Cannot your Sister come and take a half bed—or a whole one? Which, alas, we have to spare.

NOTE

[Mary Lamb would have been taken to Walden House, Edmonton, where mental patients were received. A year later the Lambs moved there altogether.

The Hunchback would be Knowles; the Straitback I do not recognise.

John Forster (1812-1876), whom we now meet for the first time, one of Lamb's last new friends, was the author, later, of *Lives of*

the Statesmen of the Commonwealth and the Lives also of Goldsmith and Dickens. His *Life of Pym*, which was in Vol. II. of the *Statesman*, did not appear until 1837, but I assume that he had ridden the hobby for some years.

Mr. Bertram Dobell has a letter from Lamb to Talfourd, belonging probably to the same period, asking him to bring Ryle. He says that Moxon and Knowles are coming; and adds the erratum "for M. and K. read K. and M. Booksellers *after* authors." He ends: "Yours till Death; you are mine after"—Talfourd being one of his executors.]

LETTER 522

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON (?)

[P.M. June 1, 1832.]

I AM a little more than half alive—
I was more than half dead—
the Ladies are very agreeable—
I flatter myself I am less than disagreeable—
Convey this to Mr. Forster—
Whom, with you, I shall just be able to see some 10 days hence
and believe me ever yours C. L.

I take Forster's name to be John,
But you know whom I mean,
the Pym-praiser
not pimp-raiser.

NOTE

[This letter possibly is not to Moxon at all, as the wrapper (on which is the postmark) may perhaps belong to another letter.]

LETTER 523

CHARLES LAMB TO WALTER WILSON

[Dated at end: Aug., 1832.]

MY dear Wilson, I cannot let my old friend Mrs. Hazlitt (Sister in Law to poor Wm. Hazlitt) leave Enfield, without endeavouring to introduce her to you, and to Mrs. Wilson. Her daughter has a School in your neighbourhood, and for her talents and by [for] her merits I can *answer*. If it lies in your power to be useful to them in any way, the obligation to your old office-fellow

will be great. I have not forgotten Mrs. Wilson's Album, and if you, or she, will be the means of procuring but one pupil for Miss Hazlitt, I will rub up my poor poetic faculty to the best. But you and she will one day, I hope, bring the Album with you to Enfield—

Poor Mary is ill, or would send her love—

Yours very Truly
C. LAMB.

News.—Collet is dead, Du Puy is dead. I am *not*.—Hone! is turned Believer in Irving and his unknown Tongues.

In the name of dear Defoe which alone might be a Bond of Union between us, Adieu!

NOTE

[Addressed to Wilson, Burnet House, Bath.

Mrs. Hazlitt was the wife of John Hazlitt, the miniature painter, who died in 1837. I have been unable to trace her daughter's history.

Collet I do not recognise. Probably an old fellow-clerk at the India House, as was Du Puy (see note on page 327). It is true that Hone was converted by Irving, and became himself a preacher.]

LETTER 524

CHARLES LAMB TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

[No date. ? Early October, 1832.]

FOR Landor's kindness I have just esteem. I shall tip him a Letter, when you tell me how to address him.

Give Emma's kindest regrets that I could not entice her good friend, your Nephew, here.

Her warmest love to the Bury Robinsons—our all three to H. Crab.

C. L.

NOTE

[Mr. Macdonald's transcript adds: "Accompanying copy of Landor's verses to Emma Isola, and others, contributed to Miss Wordsworth's Album, and poem written at Wast-water. C. L."

The Bury Robinsons were Crabb Robinson's brother and other relatives, whom Miss Isola had met when at Fornham.]

LETTER 525

CHARLES LAMB TO WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

[No date. October, 1832.]

DEAR Sir, pray accept a little volume. 'Tis a legacy from Elia, you'll see. Silver and Gold had he none, but such as he had, left he you. I do not know how to thank you for attending to my request about the Album. I thought you would never remember it. Are not you proud and thankful, Emma?

Yes, *very*, *both*—

EMMA ISOLA.

Many things I had to say to you, which there was not time for. *One* why should I forget? 'tis for Rose Aylmer, which has a charm I cannot explain. I lived upon it for weeks.—

Next I forgot to tell you I knew all your Welch annoyancers, the measureless Beethams. I knew a quarter of a mile of them. 17 brothers and 16 sisters, as they appear to me in memory. There was one of them that used to fix his long legs on my fender, and tell a story of a shark, every night, endless, immortal. How have I grudged the salt sea ravener not having had his gorge of him!

The shortest of the daughters measured 5 foot eleven without her shoes. Well, some day we may confer about them. But they were tall. Surely I have discover'd the longitude—

Sir, If you can spare a moment, I should be happy to hear from you—that rogue Robinson detained your verses, till I call'd for them. Don't entrust a bit of prose to the rogue, but believe me

Your obliged C. L.

My Sister sends her kind regards.

NOTE

[Crabb Robinson took Landor to see Lamb on September 28, 1832. The following passage in Forster's *Life of Landor* describes the visit and explains this letter:—

The hour he passed with Lamb was one of unalloyed enjoyment. A letter from Crabb Robinson before he came over had filled him with affection for that most lovable of men, who had not an infirmity to which his sweetness of nature did not give something of kinship to a virtue. "I have just seen Charles and Mary Lamb," Crabb Robinson had written (20th October, 1831), "living in absolute solitude at Enfield. I find your poems lying open before Lamb. Both tipsy and sober he is ever muttering *Rose Aylmer*. But it is not those lines only that have a curious fascination for him. He is always turning to *Gebir* for things that haunt him in the same way." Their first and last hour was now passed together, and before they parted they were old friends. I visited Lamb myself (with Barry Cornwall) the following month, and remember the boyish delight with which he read to us the

ses which Landor has written in the album of Emma Isola. He had just received em through Robinson, and had lost little time in making rich return by sending andor his Last Essays of Elia.

These were Landor's verses :—

TO EMMA ISOLA

Etrurian domes, Pelasgian walls,
Live fountains, with their nymphs around
Terraced and citron-scented halls,
Skies smiling upon sacred ground—
The giant Alps, averse to France,
Point with impatient pride to those,
Calling the Briton to advance,
Amid eternal rocks and snows—
I dare not bid him stay behind,
I dare not tell him where to see
The fairest form, the purest mind,
Ausonia! that e'er sprang from thee,

and this is "Rose Aylmer" :—

Ah what avails the sceptred race!
Ah what the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.
Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
I consecrate to thee.

Of the measureless Bethams Lamb wrote in similar terms, bu[redacted]t more fully, in an article in the *New Times* in 1825, entitled "Man[redacted]y Friends" (see Vol. I., page 270).

On April 9, 1834, Landor wrote to Lady Blessington :—

I do not think that you ever knew Charles Lamb, who is lately dead. Robins[redacted]on took me to see him.

"Once, and once only, have I seen thy face,
Elia! once only has thy tripping tongue
Run o'er my heart, yet never has been left
Impression on it stronger or more sweet.
Cordial old man! what youth was in thy years,
What wisdom in thy levity, what soul
In every utterance of thy purest breast!
Of all that ever wore man's form, 'tis thee
I first would spring to at the gate of Heaven."

I say *tripping* tongue, for Charles Lamb stammered and spoke hurriedly. He did not think it worth while to put on a fine new coat to come down and see me in, as poor Coleridge did, but met me as if I had been a friend of twenty years' standing; indeed, he told me I had been so, and shewed me some things I had written much longer ago, and had utterly forgotten. The world will never see again two such delightful volumes as "The Essays of Elia;" no man living is capable of writing the worst twenty pages of them. The Continent has Zadig and Gil Blas, we have Elia and Sir Roger de Coverly.

In a letter to Southey the lines differed, ending thus :

Few are the spirits of the glorified
I'd spring to earlier at the gate of Heaven.]

LETTER 526

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[Late 1832.]

A POOR mad usher (and schoolfellow of mine) has been pestering me *through you* with poetry and petitions. I have desired him to call upon you for a half sovereign, which place to my account.

I have buried Mrs. Reynolds at last, who has *virtually at least* bequeath'd me a legacy of £32 per Ann., to which add that my other pensioner is safe housed in the workhouse, which gets me £10.

Richer by both legacies £42 per Ann.

For a loss of a loss is as good as a gain of a gain.

But let this be *between ourselves*, specially keep it from A—— or I shall speedily have candidates for the Pensions.

Mary is laid up with a cold.

Will you convey the inclosed by hand?

When you come, if you ever do, bring me one *Devil's Visit*, I mean *Southey's*; also the Hogarth which is complete, Noble's I think. Six more letters to do. Bring my bill also. C. L.

Note

[I do not identify the usher. Mrs. Reynolds, Lamb's first schoolmistress, we have met. The other pensioner I do not positively identify; presumably it was Morgan, Coleridge's old friend, to whom Lamb and Southey had each given ten pounds annually from 1819.

A—— I cannot positively identify. Perhaps the philanthropic Allsop.

Southey's "Devil's Visit" was a new edition of *The Devil's Walk* illustrated by Thomas Landseer.

Noble's "Hogarth." Noble was the engraver.]

LETTER 527

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[No date. Winter, 1832.]

THANK you for the books. I am ashamed to take tythe thus of your press. I am worse to a publisher than the two Universities and the Brit. Mus. A[llan] C[unningham] I will forthwith read. B[arry] C[ornwall] (I can't get out of the A, B, C) I have more than read. Taken altogether, 'tis too Lovey; but what

delicacies! I like most "King Death;" glorious 'bove all, "The Lady with the Hundred Rings;" "The Owl;" "Epistle to What's his Name" (here may be I'm partial); "Sit down, Sad Soul;" "The Pauper's Jubilee" (but that's old, and yet 'tis never old); "The Falcon;" "Felon's Wife;" damn "Madame Pasty" (but that is borrowed);

Apple-pie is very good,
And so is apple-pasty;
But ——
O Lard! 'tis very nasty:

but chiefly the dramatic fragments,—scarce three of which should have escaped my Specimens, had an antique name been prefixed. They exceed his first. So much for the nonsense of poetry; now to the serious business of life. Up a court (Blandford Court) in Pall Mall (exactly at the back of Marlbro' House), with iron gate in front, and containing two houses, at No. 2 did lately live Leishman my taylor. He is moved somewhere in the neighbourhood, devil knows where. Pray find him out, and give him the opposite. I am so much better, tho' my hand shakes in writing it, that, after next Sunday, I can well see F[orster] and you. Can you throw B. C. in? Why tarry the wheels of my Hogarth?

CHARLES LAMB.

NOTE

["I am worse to a publisher." There is a rule by which a publisher must present copies of every book to the Stationers' Hall, to be distributed to the British Museum, the Bodleian, and Cambridge University Library.

"A. C. . . . B. C." Allan Cunningham's *Maid of Elvar* and Barry Cornwall's *English Songs*, both published by Moxon. This is Barry Cornwall's "King Death":—

KING DEATH

King Death was a rare old fellow!
He sate where no sun could shine;
And he lifted his hand so yellow,
And poured out his coal-black wine.
Hurrah! for the coal-black Wine!

There came to him many a Maiden,
Whose eyes had forgot to shine;
And Widows, with grief o'erladen,
For a draught of his sleepy wine.
Hurrah! for the coal-black Wine!

The Scholar left all his learning;
The Poet his fancied woes;
And the Beauty her bloom returning,
Like life to the fading rose.
Hurrah! for the coal-black Wine!

All came to the royal old fellow,
  Who laugh'd till his eyes dropped brine,
As he gave them his hand so yellow,
  And pledged them in Death's black wine.
Hurrah !—Hurrah !
Hurrah ! for the coal-black Wine !

By the "Epistle to What's his Name" Lamb refers to some lines to himself which had been printed first in the *London Magazine* in 1825, entitled "The Epistle to Charles Lamb." They are printed in the Appendix, page 962.

"Madame Pasty." Procter had some lines on Madame Pasta.

"My Specimens." Lamb's *Dramatic Specimens*, which very likely suggested to Procter the idea of "Dramatic Fragments."

Under the date November 30, 1832, an unsigned letter endorsed from Charles Lamb to Professor Wilson is printed in Mrs. Gordon's "*Christopher North:*" *A Memoir of John Wilson.* Although in its first paragraph it might be Lamb's, there is evidence to the contrary in the remainder, and I have no doubt that the endorsement was a mistake. It is therefore not printed here.]

LETTER 528

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[Dated by Forster at end: Dec., 1832.]

THIS is my notion. Wait till you are able to throw away a round sum (say £1500) upon a speculation, and then—don't do it. For all your loving encouragem^ts^—till this final damp came in the shape of your letter, thanks—for Books also—greet the Fosters and Proctors—and come singly or conjunctively as soon as you can. Johnson and Fare's sheets have been wash'd—unless you prefer Danby's *last* bed—at the Horseshoe.

Note

[I assume Lamb's advice to refer to Moxon's intention of founding a paper called *The Reflector*, which Forster was to edit. All trace of this periodical has vanished, but it existed in December, 1832, for three numbers, and was then withdrawn. Lamb contributed to it.

Johnson and Fare had just murdered—on December 19—a Mr. Danby, at Enfield. They had met him in the Crown and Horseshoes (see note to next Letter).

Mr. W. C. Hazlitt prints a note to Moxon in his Bohn edition in which Lamb advises the withdrawal of *The Reflector* at once. This would be December, 1832.]

LETTER 529

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN FORSTER

To Messrs. Bradbury & Evans, 14 Bouverie Street, Fleet Street. For the Editor of the Reflector from C. Lamb.

[P.M. Dec. 23, 1832.]

I AM very sorry the poor Reflector is abortive. Twas a child of good promise for its *weeks*. But if the chances are so much against it, withdraw immediately. It is idle up hill waste of money to spend another stamp on it.

NOTE

[Around the seal of this note are the words in Lamb's hand: "Obiit Edwardus Reflector Armiger, 31 Dec., 1832. Natus tres hebdomidas. Pax animæ ejus."

The newspaper stamp at that time was fourpence (less 25 per cent.)

Here should come a letter from Lamb to Louisa Badams (*née* Holcroft), dated December 31, 1832, not available for this edition, in which, after some plain speaking about the Westwoods, Lamb refers to the murder of Mr. Danby at Enfield by Fare and two other men on the night of December 19, and says that he had been in their company at the inn a little before, and the next morning was asked to give his evidence. Canon Ainger says that Lamb's story is a hoax, but it reads reasonably enough and might as easily have happened as not.]

LETTER 530

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[No date. Jan., 1833.]

I HAVE a proof from Dilke. *That* serves for next Saturday. What Forster had, will serve a second. I sent you a *third* concluding article for *him* and *us* (a capital hit, I think, about Cervantes) of which I leave you to judge whether we shall not want it to print *before* a third or even second week. In that case beg D. to clap them in all at once; and keep the Atheneums to print from. What I send is the concluding Article of the painters.

Soften down the Title in the Book to

"Defect of the Imaginative Faculty in Artists."

Consult Dilke.

NOTE

[Lamb's *Elia* essay "Barrenness of the Imaginative Faculty in the Production of Modern Art," intended originally for *The Englishman's Magazine* (see Letter 515), was partly printed by Forster in *The Reflector* and finally printed in full in *The Athenæum* in January and February, 1833. The reference to Don Quixote is at the end. Moxon was already printing the *Last Essays of Elia*.

"Consult Dilke" was a favourite phrase with Lamb and Hood and, long before, with Keats.]

LETTERS 531, 532, 533 AND 534

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. Jan. 3 (1833).]

BE sure and let me have the Atheneum—or, if they don't appear, the Copy back again. I have no other.

I am glad you are introduced to Rickman, *cultivate the introduction.* I will not forget to write to him.

I want to see Blackwood, but *not without you.*

We are yet Emma-less.

And so that is all I can remember.

This is a corkscrew.

[*Here is a florid corkscrew.*]

C. Lamb, born 1775
flourished about
the year 1832.

C. L. Fecit.—

NOTE

[Lamb refers still to the "Barrenness of Imagination" series.

There are several scraps addressed by Lamb to Forster in the South Kensington Museum; but they are undated and of little importance. I append one or two here:—]

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN FORSTER

Orders.

GO to Dilke's, or Let Mockson, and ax him to add this to what I sent him a few days since, or to continue it the week after. The Plantas &c. are capital.

Requests.

Come down with M. and *Dante* and L. E. L. on Sunday.

ELIA.

I dont mean at his House, but the Atheneum office. Send it there. Hand shakes.

NOTE

[The Plantas sound like cigars. If so, we must suppose that Lamb still smoked. M. and Dante and L. E. L. would be Moxon, Cary and Letitia Landon, the poetess, to whom Forster was for a while engaged.

This letter, up to a certain point, was repeated as follows. It also is at South Kensington :—]

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN FORSTER

I WISH youd go to Dilke's, or let Mockson, and ax him to add this to what I sent him a few days since, or to continue it the week after. The Plantas &c. are capital. Come down with Procter and Dante on Sunday. I send you the last proof—not of my friendship. I knew you would like the title. I do thoroughly. The Last Essays of Elia keeps out any notion of its being a second volume.

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN FORSTER

THERE was a talk of Richmond on Sunday but we were hampered with an unavoidable engagement that day, besides that I wish to show it you when the woods are in full leaf. Can you have a quiet evening here to night or to-morrow night? We are certainly *at home*.

Yours C. LAMB.

Friday.

LETTER 535

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. Jan. 24, 1833.]

DEAR Murray! *Moxon* I mean.—I am not to be making you pay postage every day, but cannot let pass the congratulations of sister, brother, and "Silk Cloak," *all most cordial* on your change of place. Rogers approving, who can demur? Tell me when you get into Dover St. and what the *No.* is—that I may change foolscap for gilt, and plain Mr. for Esqr. I shall *Mister* you while you stay—

If you are not too great to attend to it, I wish us to do without the Sonnets of Sydney: 12 will take up as many pages, and be too palpable a fill up. Perhaps we may leave them out, retaining the

article, but that is not worth saving. I hope you liked my Cervantes Article which I sent you yesterday.

Not an inapt quotation, for your fallen predecessor in Albemarle Street, to whom you must give the *coup du main*—

Murray, long enough his country's pride.

Pope.

[*Then, written at the bottom of the page*] there's [*and written on the next page*] there's nothing over here.

NOTE

[Moxon was moving from 64 New Bond Street to 33 Dover Street.

"Silk Cloak" would, I imagine, probably be a name for Emma Isola.

"The Sonnets of Sydney"—Lamb's *Elia* essay on this subject. It was not omitted from the *Last Essay*, which Moxon was to publish, and eleven sonnets were quoted.

"Your fallen predecessor." It is hardly needful to say that Moxon made very little difference to Murray's business. The line is from Pope's Sixth Epistle of the First Book of Horace. To Mr. Murray, who afterwards was Earl of Mansfield.]

LETTER 536

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[Feb. 10. P.M. Feby. 11, 1833.]

I WISH you would omit "by the author of Elia," *now*, in advertising that damn'd "Devil's Wedding."

I had sneaking hopes you would have dropt in today—tis my poor birthday. Don't stay away so. Give Forster a hint—you are to bring your brother some day—*sisters* in better weather.

Pray give me one line to say if you receiv'd and forwarded Emma's pacquet to Miss Adams,

and how Dover St. looks.

Adieu.

Is there no Blackwood this month?

[*Added on cover :*—]

What separation will there be between the friend's preface, and THE ESSAYS? Should not "Last Essays &c." head them? If 'tis too late, don't mind. I don't care a farthing about it.

NOTE

["Devil's Wedding"—*Satan in Search of a Wife.*

"What separation"—the *Last Essays of Elia* were preceded by "A Character of the Late Elia."

Here should come a letter from Lamb to Louisa Badams, dated February 15, 1833. Lamb begins with a further reference to the Enfield murder (see note to Letter 529). He says that his sister and himself have got through the *Inferno* with the help of Cary, and Mary is beginning Tasso.]

LETTER 537

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[No date. Feb., 1833.]

MY dear M.—I send you the last proof—not of my friendship —pray see to the finish.

I think you will see the necessity of adding those words after "Preface"—and "Preface" should be in the "contents-table"—

I take for granted you approve the title. I do thoroughly—

Perhaps if you advertise it in full, as it now stands, the title page might have simply the Last Essays of Elia, to keep out any notion of its being a second vol.—

Well, I wish us luck heartily for your sake who have smarted by me.—

LETTER 538

CHARLES LAMB TO T. N. TALFOURD

February, 1833.

MY dear T.,—Now cannot I call him *Serjeant*; what is there in a coif? Those canvas-sleeves protective from ink, when he was a law-chit—a *Chitty*ling, (let the leathern apron be apocryphal) do more 'specially plead to the Jury Court of old memory. The costume (will he agnize it?) was as of a desk-fellow or Socius Plutei. Methought I spied a brother!

That familiarity is extinct for ever. Curse me if I can call him Mr. Serjeant—except, mark me, in *company*. Honour where honour is due; but should he ever visit us, (do you think he ever will, Mary?) what a distinction should I keep up between him and our less fortunate friend, H. C. R.! Decent respect shall always be the Crabb's—but, somehow, short of reverence.

Well, of my old friends, I have lived to see two knighted: one made a judge, another in a fair way to it. Why am I restive? why stands my sun upon Gibeah?

Variously, my dear Mrs. Talfourd, (I can be more familiar with her!) *Mrs. Serjeant Talfourd*,—my sister prompts me—(these ladies stand upon ceremonies)—has the congratulable news affected the members of our small community. Mary comprehended it at once, and entered into it heartily. Mrs. W—— was, as usual, perverse—wouldn't, or couldn't, understand it. A Serjeant? She thought Mr. T. was in the law. Didn't know that he ever 'listed.

Emma alone truly sympathised. *She* had a silk gown come home that very day, and has precedence before her learned sisters accordingly.

We are going to drink the health of Mr. and Mrs. Serjeant, with all the young serjeantry—and that is all that I can see that I shall get by the promotion.

Valete, et mementote amici quondam vestri humillimi.

C. L.

NOTE

[Talfourd, who had been pupil of Joseph Chitty, had just become a serjeant.

"Socius Plutei." Companion of the book-shelf.

"H. C. R."—Crabb Robinson.

"My old friends." Stoddart and Tuthill were knighted; Barron Field was a judge; Talfourd was to become both a knight and a judge.

"Why stands my sun." See Joshua x.

"Mrs. W——." Mrs. Westwood, I suppose.

"*Valete, et mementote* . . ." Farewell, and remember once more your humble friend.]

LETTER 539

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[No date. 1833.]

DR M. let us see you & your Brother on Sunday—

The Elias are beautifully got up. Be cautious how you name the *probability* of bringing 'em ever out complete—till these are gone off. Everybody'd say "O I'll wait then."

An't we to have a copy of the Sonnets—

Mind, I shall *insist* upon having no more copies: only I shall take 3 or 4 more of you at trade price. I am resolute about this.

Yours ever—

LETTER 540

CHARLES LAMB TO C. W. DILKE

[Feb., Feb., 1833.]

CHRISTIAN NAMES OF WOMEN

(TO EDITH S——)

In Christian world MARY the garland wears!
REBECCA sweetens on a Hebrew's ear;
Quakers for pure PRISCILLA are more clear;
And the light Gaul by amorous NINON swears.
Among the lesser lights how LUCY shines!
What air of fragrance ROSAMUND throws round!
How like a hymn doth sweet CECILIA sound!
Of MARTHAS, and of ABIGAILS, few lines
Have bragg'd in verse. Of coarsest household stuff
Should homely JOAN be fashioned. But can
You BARBARA resist, or MARTHA?
And is not CLARE for love excuse enough?
Yet, by my faith in numbers, I profess,
These all, than SAXON EDITH, please me less.

MANY thanks for the life you have given us—I am perfectly satisfied. But if you advert to it again, I give you a delicate hint. Barbara S—— shadows under that name Miss Kelly's early life, and I had the Anecdote beautifully from her.

NOTE

[The sonnet, addressed to Edith Southey, was printed in *The Athenæum* for March 9, 1833.

For "Barbara S——" see Vol. II. of the present edition, page 202.]

LETTER 541

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[No date. Early 1833.]

NO *writing*, and no *word*, ever passed between Taylor, or Hessey, and me, respecting copy right. This I can swear. They made a volume at their own will, and volunteerd me a third of profits, which came to £30, which came to *Bilk*, and never came back to me. Proctor has acted a friendly part—when did he otherwise? I am very sorry to hear Mrs. P—— *as I suppose* is not so well. I meditated a rallying epistle to him on his Gemini—his two Sosias, accusing him of having acted a notable piece of duplicity. But if his partner in the double dealing suffers—it

would be unseasonable. You cannot remembr. me to him too kindly. Your chearful letter has relieved us from the dumps; all may be well. I rejoice at your letting your house so magnificently. Talfourd's letter may be directed to him "On the Western Circuit."[1] That is the way, send it. With Blackwood pray send Piozziana and a Literary Gazette if you have one. The Piozzi and that shall be immedtly return'd, and I keep Mad. Darblay for you eventually, a longwinded reader at present having use of it.

The weather is so queer that I will not say I *expect* you &c.—but am prepared for the pleasure of seeing you when you can come.

We had given you up (the post man being late) and Emma and I have 20 times this morning been to the door in the rain to spy for him coming.

Well, I know it is not all settled, but your letter is chearful and cheer-making.

We join in triple love to you. ELIA & Co.

I am settled *in any case* to take at Bookseller's price any copies I have more. Therefore oblige me by sending a copy of Elia to Coleridge and B. Barton, and enquire (at your leisure of course) how I can send one, with a letter, to Walter Savage Landor. These 3 put in your next bill on me. I am peremptory that it shall be so. These are all I can want.

[1] Is it the Western? he goes to Reading &c.

NOTE

[John Taylor, representing the firm of Taylor & Hessey, seems to have set up a claim of copyright in those essays in the *Last Essays of Elia* that were printed in the *London Magazine*.

For Procter's part, see next letter.

Piozziana; or, Recollections of the late Mrs. Piozzi (Johnson's Mrs. Thrale), was published in 1833. It was by the Rev. E. Mangin.

Mad. Darblay would be *The Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, 1832, by his daughter Madame d'Arblay (Admiral Burney's niece). The book was severely handled in the *Quarterly* for April, 1833.

The following letter, which is undated, seems to refer to the difficulty mentioned above:—]

LETTER 542

CHARLES LAMB TO B. W. PROCTER

Enfield, Monday.

DEAR P——, I have more than £30 in my house, and am independent of quarter-day, not having received my pension.

Pray settle, I beg of you, the matter with Mr. Taylor. I know nothing of bills, but most gladly will I forward to you that sum for him, for Mary is very anxious that M[oxon] may not get into any litigation. The money is literally rotting in my desk for want of use. I should not interfere with M——, tell M—— when you see him, but Mary is really uneasy; so lay it to that account, not mine.

Yours ever and two evers, C. L.

Do it smack at once, and I will explain to M—— why I did it. It is simply done to ease her mind. When you have settled, write, and I'll send the bank notes to you twice, in halves.

Deduct from it your share in broken bottles, which, you being capital in your lists, I take to be two shillings. Do it as you love Mary and me. Then Elia's himself again.

LETTER 543

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM HONE

[March 6, 1833.]

DEAR Friend—Thee hast sent a Christian epistle to me, and I should not feel clear if I neglected to reply to it, which would have been sooner if that vain young man, to whom thou didst intrust it, had not kept it back. We should rejoice to see thy outward man here, especially on a day which should not be a first day, being liable to worldly callers in on that day. Our little book is delayed by a heathenish injunction, threatened by the man Taylor. Canst thou copy and send, or bring with thee, a vanity in verse which in my younger days I wrote on friend Aders pictures? Thou wilt find it in the book called the Table Book.

Tryphena and Tryphosa, whom the world calleth Mary and Emma, greet you with me. CH. LAMB.

6th of 3d month 4th day.

NOTE

[On this letter is written by Hone in pencil: "This acknowledges a note from me to C. L. written in January preceding and sent by young Will Hazlitt. Received in my paralysis. March, 1833."]

LETTER 544

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. March 19, 1833.]

I SHALL *expect* Forster and two Moxons on Sunday, and *hope* for Procter.

I am obliged to be in town next Monday. Could we contrive to

make a party (paying or not is immaterial) for Miss Kelly's that night, and can you shelter us after the play, I mean Emma and me? I fear, I cannot persuade Mary to join us.

N.B. *I can sleep at a public house.*

Send an Elia (mind, I *insist* on buying it) to T. Manning Esq. at Sir G. Tuthill's Cavendish Square.

DO WRITE.

NOTE

[Miss Kelly was then giving an entertainment called "Dramatic Recollections" at the Strand Theatre.]

LETTER 545

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[No date. ? Spring, 1833.]

One o Clock.

THIS instant receiv'd, this instant I answer your's—Dr. Cresswell has one copy, which I cannot just now re-demand, because at his desire I have sent a "Satan" to him, which when he ask'd for, I frankly told him, was imputed a lampoon on HIM!!! I have sent it him, and cannot, till we come to explanation, go to him or send—

But on the faith of a Gentleman, you shall have it back some day *for another*. The 3 I send. I think 2 of the blunders perfectly immaterial. But your feelings, and I fear *pocket*, is every thing. I have just time to pack this off by the 2 o Clock stage. Yours till we meet

At all events I behave more gentlemanlike than Emma did, in returning the copies.

Yours till we meet—DO COME.

Bring the Sonnets—

Why not publish 'em?—or let another Bookseller?

NOTE

[Dr. Cresswell was vicar of Edmonton. Having married the daughter of a tailor—or so Mr. Fuller Russell states in his account of a conversation with Lamb in *Notes and Queries*—he was in danger of being ribaldly associated with Satan's matrimonial adventures in Lamb's ballad. I cannot explain to what book Lamb refers: possibly to the *Last Essays of Elia*, which Moxon, having found errors in, wished to withdraw, substituting another. The point probably cannot be cleared up. The sonnets would be Moxon's own, which he had printed privately (see Letter 566).]

LETTER 546

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. March 30, 1833.]

DR M. Emma and we are *delighted* with the Sonnets, and she with her nice Walton. Mary is deep in the novel. Come as early as you can. I stupidly overlookd your proposal to meet you in Green Lanes, for in some strange way I *burnt my leg*, shin-quarter, at Forster's;* it is laid up on a stool, and Asbury attends. You'll see us all as usual, about Taylor, when you come.

Yours ever C. L.

* Or the night I came home, for I felt it not bad till yesterday. But I scarce can hobble across the room.

I have secured 4 places for night: in haste.

Mary and E. do not dream of any thing we have discussed.

NOTE

[I fancy that the last sentence refers to an offer for Miss Isola's hand which Moxon had just made to Lamb.]

LETTER 547

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[No date. Spring, 1833.]

DEAR M. many thanks for the Books; the *Faust* I will acknowledge to the Author. But most thanks for one immortal sentence, "If I do not *cheat* him, never *trust* me again." I do not know whether to admire most, the wit or justness of the sentiment. It has my cordial approbation. My sense of meum and tuum applauds it. I maintain it, the eighth commandment hath a secret special reservation, by which the reptile is exempt from any protection from it; as a dog, or a nigger, he is not a holder of property. Not a ninth of what he detains from the world is his own. Keep your hands from picking and stealing is no ways referable to his acquists. I doubt whether bearing false witness against thy neighbor at all contemplated this possible scrub. Could Moses have seen the speck in vision? An ex post facto law alone could relieve him, and we are taught to expect no eleventh commandment. The out-law to the Mosaic dispensation! —unworthy to have seen Moses' behind—to lay his desecrating

hands upon Elia! Has the irriverent ark-toucher been struck blind I wonder—? The more I think of him, the less I think of him. His meanness is invisible with aid of solar microscope, my moral eye smarts at him. The less flea that bites little fleas! The great Beast! the beggarly nit!

More when we meet.

Mind, you'll come, two of you—and couldn't you go off in the morning, that we may have a daylong curse at him, if curses are not dis-hallowed by descending so low? Amen. Maledicatur in extremis.

NOTE

[Abraham Hayward's translation of *Faust* was published by Moxon in February, 1833. Lamb's letter of thanks was said by the late Edmund Yates to be a very odd one. I have not seen it.

We may perhaps assume that Moxon's reply to Lamb's letter stating that Taylor's claim had been paid contained the "immortal sentence."

"Not a ninth." A tailor (Taylor) is only a ninth of a man.

"The less flea." Remembering Swift's lines in "On Poetry, a Rhapsody":—

So, naturalists observe, a flea
Has smaller fleas that on him prey;
And these have smaller still to bite 'em,
And so proceed *ad infinitum*.]

LETTER 548

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN FORSTER

[No date. ? March, 1833.]

SWALLOW your damn'd dinner and your brandy and water fast—

& come immediately

I want to take Knowles in to Emma's only female friend for 5 minutes only, and we are free for the eveng.

I'll do a Prologue.

NOTE

[The prologue was for Sheridan Knowles' play "The Wife." Lamb wrote both prologue and epilogue (see Vol. V., pages 129, 130 and 349).]

LETTER 549

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[No date. ? April 10, 1833.]

DEAR M. The first Oak sonnet, and the Nightingale, may show their faces in any Annual unblushing. Some of the others are very good.

The Sabbath too much what you have written before.

You are destined to shine in Sonnets, I tell you.

Shall we look for you Sunday, we did in vain Good Friday [April 5].

[*A signature was added by Mrs. Moxon for Mr. Frederick Locker-Lampson, evidently from another letter :—*]

Your truest friend

C. LAMB.

NOTE

[I quote Moxon's first oak sonnet :—

On an Oak, in the Parish of Cheshunt, said to have been planted in 1066, by Sir Theodore Godfrey, or Goffby, who came over with William the Conqueror.

Gigantic time-worn Tree, what moons have fled
  Since thou wert planted first by warlike hand !
  Nigh twice four hundred years have swept the land ;
And yet, defying time, thou lift'st thy head
Still green, nor fear'st the storms that round have spread
  Thy weak compeers. They scatter'd lie, and rent,
  Ev'n as that Chieftain old, whose monument
Thou art. In him pleas'd Fancy fain would trace
  A knight of high emprise and good intent ;
Within whose breast wrong'd orphans' woes found place,
  Ever in rightful cause the Champion free,
Of his proud times the ornament and grace ;
  A wight well worthy to recorded be,
  In fairest archives of bright chivalry.]

LETTER 550

CHARLES LAMB TO C. W. DILKE

[No date. April, 1833.]

DR Sir, I read your note in a moment of great perturbation with my Landlady and chuck'd it in the fire, as I should have done an epistle of Paul, but as far as my Sister recalls the

import of it, I reply. The Sonnets (36 of them) have never been printed, much less published, till the other day,[1] save that a few of 'em have come out in Annuals. Two vols., of poetry of M.'s, have been publish'd, but they were not these. The "Nightingale" has been in one of the those gewgaws, the Annuals; whether the other I sent you has, or not, penitus ignoro. But for heaven's sake do with 'em what you like.

Yours C. L.

[1] The proof sheets only were in my hand about a fortnight ago.

NOTE

[Moxon's sonnets were reviewed, probably by Lamb, in *The Athenæum* for April 13, 1833. The sonnet to the nightingale (see page 852) was quoted. This review will be found on page 384 of Vol. I. of the present edition.]

LETTER 551

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. WILLIAM AYRTON

[P.M. April (16), 1833.]

DEAR Mrs. Ayrton, I do not know which to admire most, your kindness, or your patience, in copying out that intolerable rabble of panegryc from over the Atlantic. By the way, now your hand is in, I wish you would copy out for me the 13th 17th and 24th of Barrow's sermons in folio, and all of Tillotson's (folio also) except the first, which I have in Manuscript, and which, you know, is Ayrton's favorite. Then—but I won't trouble you any farther just now. Why does not A come and see me? Can't he and Henry Crabbe concert it? 'Tis as easy as lying is to me. Mary's kindest love to you both. ELIA.

NOTE

[The letter is accompanied by a note in the writing of William Scrope Ayrton, the son of William Ayrton, copied from Mrs. Ayrton's *Diary*:—

"March 17, 1833.—Copied a critique upon Elia's works from the Mirror of America a sort of news paper."]

LETTER 552

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. April 25, 1833.]

MY dear Moxon, We perfectly agree in your arrangement. *It has quite set my sister's mind at rest.* She will come with you on Sunday, and return at eve, and I will make comfortable arrangem^ts^ with the Buffams. We desire to have you here dining unWestwooded, and I will try and get you a bottle of choice port. I have transferr'd the stock I told you to Emma. The plan of the Buffams steers admirably between two niceties. Tell Emma we thoroughly approve it. As our damnd Times is a day after the fair, I am setting off to Enfield Highway to see in a morning paper (alas! the Publican's) how the play ran. Pray, bring 4 orders for Mr. Asbury—undated.

In haste (not for neglect)

Yours ever

C. LAMB.

Thursday.

NOTE

[Lamb evidently refers to Moxon's engagement to Miss Isola being now settled.

The play was Sheridan Knowles' "The Wife," produced on April 24.

The Buffams were the landladies of the house in Southampton Buildings, where Lamb lodged in town.]

LETTER 553

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. April 27, 1833.]

DEAR M. Mary and I are very poorly. Asbury says 'tis nothing but influenza. Mr. W. appears all but dying—he is delirious. Mrs. W. was taken so last night, that Mary was obliged at midnight to knock up Mrs. Waller to come and sit up with her. We have had a sick child, who sleeping, or not sleeping, next me with a pasteboard partition between, killed my sleep. The little bastard is gone. My bedfellows are Cough and cramp, we sleep 3 in a bed. Domestic arrangem^ts^ (Blue Butcher and all) devolve on Mary. Don't come yet to this house of pest and age. We propose when E. and you agree on the time, to come up and

meet her at the Buffams', say a week hence, but do you make the appointmt. The Lachlans send her their love.

I do sadly want those 2 last Hogarths—and an't I to have the Play?

Mind our spirits are good and we are happy in your happinesses.

C. L.

Our old and ever loves to dear Em.

NOTE

["Mr. W." was Mr. Westwood.—I know nothing of the Lachlans. —The Play would be "The Wife" probably.—Miss Isola was, I imagine, staying with the Moxons.]

LETTER 554

CHARLES LAMB TO THE REV. JAMES GILLMAN

May 7, 1833.

BY a strange occurrence we have quitted Enfield for ever. Oh! the happy eternity! Who is Vicar or Lecturer for that detestable place concerns us not. But Asbury, surgeon and a good fellow, has offered to get you a Mover and Seconder, and you may use my name freely to him. Except him and Dr. Creswell, I have no respectable acquaintance in the dreary village. At least my friends are all in the *public* line, and it might not suit to have it moved at a special vestry by John Gage at the Crown and Horseshoe, licensed victualler, and seconded by Joseph Horner of the Green Dragon, ditto, that the Rev. J. G. is a fit person to be Lecturer, &c.

My dear James, I wish you all success, but am too full of my own emancipation almost to congratulate anyone else. With both our loves to your father and mother and glorious S. T. C.,

Yours, C. LAMB.

NOTE

[The Rev. James Gillman was the eldest son of Coleridge's physician and friend. He was born in 1808 and ordained in 1831. He thought in 1833 of standing as candidate for the vicarship of Enfield, but did not obtain it. After acting as Under Master of Highgate Grammar School he became in 1836 Rector of Barfreystone, in Kent. In 1847 he became Vicar of Holy Trinity, Lambeth. He died in 1877.

Mary Lamb having become ill again had been moved to Edmonton, to a private home for mental patients. Lamb followed her

soon after, and settled in the same house. It still stands (1904) almost exactly as in the Lambs' day. I append a picture.]

LETTER 555

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN FORSTER

[No date. May, 1833.]

DR F. Can you oblige me by sending 4 Box orders undated for the Olympic Theatre? I suppose Knowles can get 'em. It is for the Waldens, with whom I live. The sooner, the better, that they may not miss the "Wife"—I meet you at the Talfourds' Saturday week, and if they can't, perhaps you can, give me a bed.

Yours ratherish unwell

C. LAMB.

Mr. Walden's, Church Street, Edmonton.

Or write immediately to say if you can't get em.

NOTE

[Knowles' play "The Wife," produced at Covent Garden, was moved to the Olympic on May 9.]

LETTER 556

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN FORSTER

[P.M. May 12, 1833.]

DEAR Boy, I send you the original Elias, complete.

When I am a little composed, I shall hope to see you and Proctor here; may be, may see you first in London. C. L.

NOTE

[In the Dyce and Forster collection, at South Kensington, are preserved some of these MSS.]

LETTER 557

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

End of May nearly, [1833].

DEAR Wordsworth, Your letter, save in what respects your dear Sister's health, chear'd me in my new solitude. Mary is ill again. Her illnesses encroach yearly. The last was three months, followed by two of depression most dreadful. I look back upon her earlier attacks with longing. Nice little durations of six weeks or so, followed by complete restoration—shocking as they were to me then. In short, half her life she is dead to me, and the other half is made anxious with fears and lookings forward to the next shock. With such prospects, it seem'd to me necessary that she should no longer live with me, and be fluttered with continual removals, so I am come to live with her, at a Mr. Walden's and his wife, who take in patients, and have arranged to lodge and board us only. They have had the care of her before. I see little of her; alas! I too often hear her. Sunt lachrymæ rerum—and you and I must bear it—

To lay a little more load on it, a circumstance has happen'd, *cujus pars magna fui*, and which at another crisis I should have more rejoiced in. I am about to lose my old and only walk-companion, whose mirthful spirits were the "youth of our house," Emma Isola. I have her here now for a little while, but she is too nervous properly to be under such a roof, so she will make short visits, be no more an inmate. With my perfect approval, and more than concurrence, she is to be wedded to Moxon at the end of Aug^st^. So "perish the roses and the flowers"—how is it?

Now to the brighter side, I am emancipated from most *hated* and *detestable* people, the Westwoods. I am with attentive people, and

younger—I am 3 or 4 miles nearer the Great City, Coaches half-price less, and going always, of which I will avail myself. I have few friends left there, one or two tho' most beloved. But London Streets and faces cheer me inexpressibly, tho' of the latter not one known one were remaining.

Thank you for your cordial reception of Elia. Inter nos the Ariadne is not a darling with me, several incongruous things are in it, but in the composition it served me as illustrative

I want you in the popular fallacies to like the "Home that is no home" and "rising with the lark."

I am feeble, but chearful in this my genial hot weather,—walk'd 16 miles yesterdy. I can't read much in Summer time.

With very kindest love to all and prayers for dear Dorothy,

I remain

most attachedly yours C. Lamb.

at mr. walden's, church street, *edmonton*, middlesex.

Moxon has introduced Emma to Rogers, and he smiles upon the project. I have given E. my Milton—will you pardon me?—in part of a *portion*. It hangs famously in his Murray-like shop.

[*On the wrapper is written* :—]

Dr M[oxon], inclose this in a better-looking paper, and get it frank'd, and good by'e till Sundy. Come early— C. L.

Note

["*Sunt lachrymæ rerum.*" From the *Æneid*, I., 462. "Here are tears. . . ."

"Youth of our house." I do not find this.

"Perish the roses and the flowers." See *The Excursion*, Book VII., line 980.

"The Ariadne." See the essay on "Barrenness of the Imaginative Faculty," where Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne" in the National Gallery is highly praised (see Vol. II., pages 226 and 446). Wordsworth's favourite essays in this volume were "The Wedding" and "Old China."

"My Milton." Against the reference to the portrait of Milton, in the postscript, some one, possibly Wordsworth, has pencilled a note, now only partially legible. It runs thus: "It had been proposed by L. that W. W. should be the Possessor of [? this picture] his friend and that afterwards it was to be bequeathed to Christ's Coll. Cambridge."

Lamb had given Wordsworth in 1820 a copy of *Paradise Regained*, 1671, with this inscription: "C. Lamb to the best Knower of Milton, and therefore the worthiest occupant of this pleasant Edition. June 2d 1820."

See Appendix II., page 978, for a letter to Miss Rickman.]

LETTER 558

CHARLES LAMB TO SARAH HAZLITT

[Dated at end:] Mr. Walden's, Church Street, Edmonton, May 31, 1833.

DEAR Mrs. Hazlitt,—I will assuredly come, and find you out, when I am better. I am driven from house and home by Mary's illness. I took a sudden resolution to take my sister to Edmonton, where she was under medical treatment last time, and have arranged to board and lodge with the people. Thank God, I have repudiated Enfield. I have got out of hell, despair of heaven, and must sit down contented in a half-way purgatory. Thus ends this strange eventful history—

But I am nearer town, and will get up to you somehow before long—

I repent not of my resolution.

'Tis late, and my hand unsteady, so good b'ye till we meet.

Your old C. L.

NOTE

["Thus ends this strange eventful history" ("As You Like It," II., 7, 164).]

LETTER 559

CHARLES LAMB TO MATILDA BETHAM

[No date. June, 1833.]

DEAR Miss Betham,—I sit down, very poorly, to write to you, being come to *Mr. Walden's, Church Street, Edmonton*, to be altogether with poor Mary, who is very ill, as usual, only that her illnesses are now as many months as they used to be weeks in duration—the reason your letter only just found me. I am saddened with the havoc death has made in your family. I do not know how to appreciate the kind regard of dear Anne; Mary will understand it two months hence, I hope; but neither she nor I would rob you, if the legacy will be of use to, or comfort to you. My hand shakes so I can hardly write. On Saturday week I must come to town, and will call on you in the morning before one o'clock. Till when I take kindest leave.

Your old Friend,

C. LAMB.

NOTE

[Miss Betham's sister, Anne, who had just died, had left thirty pounds to Mary Lamb.

Here should come a note from Lamb to Mrs. Randal Norris, postmarked July 10, 1833, which encloses a note from Joseph Jekyll, the Old Bencher, thanking Lamb for a presentation copy of the *Last Essays of Elia* ("I hope not the last Essays of Elia") and asking him to accompany Mrs. Norris and her daughters on a visit to him. Jekyll adds that "poor George Dyer, blind, but as usual chearful and content, often gives . . . good accounts of you."]

LETTER 560

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. July 14, 1833.]

DEAR M. the Hogarths are *delicate*. Perhaps it will amuse Emma to tell her, that, a day or two since, Miss Norris (Betsy) call'd to me on the road from London from a gig conveying her to Widford, and engaged me to come down this afternoon. I think I shall stay only one night; she would have been glad of E.'s accompaniment, but I would not disturb her, and Mrs. N. is coming to town on Monday, so it would not have suited. Also, C. V. Le Grice gave me a dinner at Johnny Gilpin's yesterday, where we talk'd of what old friends were taken or left in the 30 years since we had met.

I shall hope to see her on Tuesdy.

To Bless you both

C. L.

Friday.

NOTE

[For Le Grice see note on page 34. "Johnny Gilpin's" was The Bell at Edmonton.

Here should come another note from Lamb to Mrs. Randal Norris, in which Lamb says that he reached home safely and thanks her for three agreeable days. Also he sends some little books, which were, I take it, copies of Moxon's private reissue of *Poetry for Children* (see note to Letter 503, page 863).

Mr. W. C. Hazlitt records that a letter from Lamb to Miss Norris was in existence in which the writer gave "minute and humorous instructions for his own funeral, even specifying the number of nails which he desired to be inserted in his coffin."]

LETTER 561

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. July 24, 1833.]

FOR god's sake, give Emma no more watches. *One* has turn'd her head. She is arrogant, and insulting. She said something very unpleasant to our old Clock in the passage, as if he did not keep time, and yet he had made her no appointment. She takes it out every instant to look at the moment-hand. She lugs us out into the fields, because there the bird-boys ask you "Pray, Sir, can you tell us what's a Clock," and she answers them punctually. She loses all her time looking "what the time is." I overheard her whispering, "Just so many hours, minutes, &c. to Tuesday —I think St. George's goes too slow"— This little present of Time, why, 'tis Eternity to her—

What can make her so fond of a gingerbread watch?

She has spoil'd some of the movements. Between ourselves, she has kissed away "half past 12," which I suppose to be the canonical hour in Hanover Sq.

Well, if "love me, love my watch," answers, she will keep time to you—

It goes right by the Horse Guards—

[*On the next page* :—]

Emma hast kist this yellow wafer—a hint.

DEAREST M.

Never mind opposite nonsense. She does not love you for the watch, but the watch for you.

I will be at the wedding, and keep the 30 July as long as my poor months last me, as a festival gloriously.

Your *ever* *ELIA.*

We have not heard from Cambridge. I will write the moment we do.

Edmonton, 24th July, 3.20 post mer. minutes 4 instants by Emma's watch.

NOTE

[There is preserved at Rowfant a letter from Lamb to Moxon, postmarked July 28, 1833, mentioning Lamb's anxiety about Martin Burney. It is unnecessary to print this.]

LETTER 562

CHARLES AND MARY LAMB TO EDWARD AND EMMA MOXON

[No date. ? July 31, 1833.]

DEAR Mr. and Mrs. Moxon—

Time very short. I wrote to Miss Fryer, and had the sweetest letter about you, Emma, that ever friendship dictated. "I am full of good wishes, I am crying with good wishes," she says; but you shall see it.—

Dear Moxon, I take your writing most kindly and shall most kindly your writing from Paris—

I want to crowd another letter to Miss Fry into the little time after dinner before Post time.

So with 20000 congratulations,

Yours, C. L.

I am calm, sober, happy. Turn over for the reason.

I got home from Dover St., by Evens, *half as sober as a judge.* I am turning over a new leaf, as I hope you will now.

[*On the next leaf Mary Lamb wrote :—*]

MY DEAR EMMA AND EDWARD MOXON,

Accept my sincere congratulations, and imagine more good wishes than my weak nerves will let me put into good set words. The dreary blank of *unanswered questions* which I ventured to ask in vain was cleared up on the wedding-day by Mrs. W. taking a glass of wine, and, with a total change of countenance, begged leave to drink Mr. and Mrs. Moxon's health. It restored me, from that moment: as if by an electrical stroke: to the entire possession of my senses—I never felt so calm and quiet after a similar illness as I do now. I feel as if all tears were wiped from my eyes, and all care from my heart. MARY LAMB.

[*At the foot of this letter Charles Lamb added :—*]

Wednesday.

DEARS AGAIN

Your letter interrupted a seventh game at Picquet which *we* were having, after walking to *Wright's* and purchasing shoes. We pass our time in cards, walks, and reading. We attack Tasso soon. C. L.

Never was such a calm, or such a recovery. 'Tis her own words, undictated.

NOTE

[The marriage of Edward Moxon and Emma Isola was celebrated on July 30. They afterwards went to Paris.

"Mrs. W."—Mrs. Walden, I imagine.

Here should come an amusing but brief account of the wedding sent by Lamb to Louisa Badams on August 20 (printed by Canon Ainger). "I am not fit for weddings or burials. Both incite a chuckle:" a sentiment which Lamb more than once expresses.

Here should come a note thanking Matilda Betham for some bridal verses written for the wedding of Edward Moxon and Emma Isola. "In haste and headake."]

LETTER 563

CHARLES LAMB TO H. F. CARY

Sept. 9th, 1833.

DEAR Sir,—Your packet I have only just received, owing, I suppose, to the absence of Moxon, who is flaunting it about *à la Parisienne* with his new bride, our Emma, much to his satisfaction and not a little to our dulness. We shall be quite well by the time you return from Worcestershire and most most (observe the repetition) glad to see you here or anywhere.

I will take my time with Darley's act. I wish poets would write a little plainer; he begins some of his words with a letter which is unknown to the English typography.

Yours, most truly, C. LAMB.

P.S.—Pray let me know when you return. We are at Mr. Walden's, Church-street, Edmonton; no longer at Enfield. You will be amused to hear that my sister and I have, with the aid of Emma, scrambled through the "Inferno" by the blessed furtherance of your polar-star translation. I think we scarce left anything unmadeout. But our partner has left us, and we have not yet resumed. Mary's chief pride in it was that she should some day brag of it to you. Your Dante and Sandys' Ovid are the only helpmates of translations. Neither of you shirk a word.

Fairfax's Tasso is no translation at all. It's better in some places; but it merely observes the number of stanzas; as for images, similes, &c., he finds 'em himself, and never "troubles Peter for the matter."

In haste, dear Cary, yours ever, C. LAMB.

Has Moxon sent you "Elia," second volume? if not, he shall. Taylor and we are at law about it.

NOTE

["Darley's act." Not now identifiable, I think.
"Taylor and we." The case had apparently not been settled by Procter. I have not found any report of a law-suit.]

LETTER 564

CHARLES AND MARY LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. Sept. 26, 1833.]
Thursday.

WE shall be most happy to see Emma, dear to every body. Mary's spirits are much better, and she longs to see again our twelve years' friend. You shall afternoon sip with me a bottle of superexcellent Port, after deducting a dinner-glass for them. We rejoyce to have E. come, the *first Visit*, without Miss ——, who, I trust, will yet behave well; but she might perplex Mary with questions. Pindar sadly wants Preface and notes. Pray, E., get to Snow Hill before 12, for we dine before 2. We will make it 2. By mistake I gave you Miss Betham's letter, with the exquisite verses, which pray return to me, or if it be an improved copy, give me the other, and Albumize mine, keeping the signature. It is too pretty a family portrait, for you not to cherish.

Your loving friends
C. LAMB.
M. LAMB.

NOTE

[Pindar was Cary's edition, which Moxon had just published. Miss Betham's verses I am sorry not to be able to give; but the following poem was addressed to Moxon by Lamb and printed in *The Athenæum* for December 7, 1833:—

TO A FRIEND ON HIS MARRIAGE

What makes a happy wedlock? What has fate
Not given to thee in thy well-chosen mate?
Good sense—good humour;—these are trivial things,
Dear M——, that each trite encomiast sings.
But she hath these, and more. A mind exempt
From every low-bred passion, where contempt,
Nor envy, nor detraction, ever found
A harbour yet; an understanding sound;
Just views of right and wrong; perception full
Of the deformed, and of the beautiful,
In life and manners; wit above her sex,
Which, as a gem, her sprightly converse decks;

Exuberant fancies, prodigal of mirth,
To gladden woodland walk, or winter hearth;
A noble nature, conqueror in the strife
Of conflict with a hard discouraging life,
Strengthening the veins of virtue, past the power
Of those whose days have been one silken hour,
Spoil'd fortune's pamper'd offspring; a keen sense
Alike of benefit, and of offence,
With reconcilement quick, that instant springs
From the charged heart with nimble angel wings;
While grateful feelings, like a signet sign'd
By a strong hand, seem burnt into her mind.
If these, dear friend, a dowry can confer
Richer than land, thou hast them all in her;
And beauty, which some hold the chiefest boon,
Is in thy bargain for a make-weight thrown.]

LETTER 565

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. Oct. 17, 1833.]

DEAR M.—Get me Shirley (there's a dear fellow) and send it soon. We sadly want books, and this will be readable again and again, and pay itself. Tell Emma I grieve for the poor self-punishing self-baffling Lady; with all our hearts we grieve for the pain and vexation she has encounterd; but we do not swerve a pin's-thought from the propriety of your measures. God comfort her, and there's an end of a painful necessity. But I am glad she goes to see her. Let her keep up all the kindness she can between them. In a week or two I hope Mary will be stout enough to come among ye, but she is not now, and I have scruples of coming alone, as she has no pleasant friend to sit with her in my absence. We are lonely. I fear the visits must be mostly from you. By the way omnibuses are 1s/3d and coach *insides* sunk to 1/6—a hint. Without disturbance to yourselves, or upsetting the economy of the dear new mistress of a family, come and see us as often as ever you can. We are so out of the world, that a letter from either of you now and then, detailing any thing, Book or Town news, is as good as a newspaper. I have desperate colds, cramps, megrims &c., but do not despond. My fingers are numb'd, as you see by my writing. Tell E. I am *very good* also. But we are poor devils, that's the truth of it. I won't apply to Dilke—just now at least —I sincerely hope the pastoral air of Dover St. will recruit poor Harriet. With best loves to all.

Yours ever C. L.

Ryle and Lowe dined here on Sunday; the manners of the latter, so gentlemanly! have attracted the special admiration of our Land-

lady. She guest R. to be nearly of my age. He always *had* an old head on young shoulders. I fear I shall always have the opposite. Tell me any thing of Foster [Forster] or any body. Write any thing you think will amuse me. I do dearly hope in a week or two to surprise you with our appearance in Dover St. . . .

NOTE

[Shirley would be Dyce's edition of James Shirley, the dramatist, in six volumes, 1833.

Harriet was Harriet Isola.

"Ryle and Lowe." Ryle we have met, but I do not identify Lowe.

I have omitted some lines about family matters at the end of the letter.]

LETTER 566

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD AND EMMA MOXON

Nov. 29th, 1833.

MARY is of opinion with me, that two of these Sonnets are of a higher grade than any poetry you have done yet. The one to Emma is so pretty! I have only allowed myself to transpose a word in the third line. Sacred shall it be for any intermeddling of mine. But we jointly beg that you will make four lines in the room of the four last. Read "Darby and Joan," in Mrs. Moxon's first album. There you'll see how beautiful in age the looking back to youthful years in an old couple is. But it is a violence to the feelings to anticipate that time in youth. I hope you and Emma will have many a quarrel and many a make-up (and she is beautiful in reconciliation!) before the dark days shall come, in which ye shall say "there is small comfort in them." You have begun a sort of character of Emma in them very sweetly; carry it on, if you can, through the last lines.

I love the sonnet to my heart, and you *shall* finish it, and I'll be damn'd if I furnish a line towards it. So much for that. The next best is

TO THE OCEAN

> "Ye gallant winds, if e'er your LUSTY CHEEKS
> Blew longing lover to his mistress' side,
> O, puff your loudest, spread the canvas wide,"

is spirited. The last line I altered, and have re-altered it as it stood. It is closer. These two are your best. But take a good

deal of time in finishing the first. How proud should Emma be of her poets!

Perhaps "O Ocean" (though I like it) is too much of the open vowels, which Pope objects to. "Great Ocean!" is obvious. "To save sad thoughts" I think is better (though not good) than for the mind to save herself. But 'tis a noble Sonnet. "St. Cloud" I have no fault to find with.

If I return the Sonnets, think it no disrespect; for I look for a printed copy. You have done better than ever. And now for a reason I did not notice 'em earlier. On Wednesday they came, and on Wednesday I was a-gadding. Mary gave me a holiday, and I set off to Snow Hill. From Snow Hill I deliberately was marching down, with noble Holborn before me, framing in mental cogitation a map of the dear London in prospect, thinking to traverse Wardour-street, &c., when diabolically I was interrupted by

Heigh-ho!
Little Barrow!—

Emma knows him,—and prevailed on to spend the day at his sister's, where was an album, and (O march of intellect!) plenty of literary conversation, and more acquaintance with the state of modern poetry than I could keep up with. I was positively distanced. Knowles' play, which, epilogued by me, lay on the PIANO, alone made me hold up my head. When I came home I read your letter, and glimpsed at your beautiful sonnet,

"Fair art thou as the morning, my young bride,"

and dwelt upon it in a confused brain, but determined not to open them till next day, being in a state not to be told of at Chatteris. Tell it not in Gath, Emma, lest the daughters triumph! I am at the end of my tether. I wish you could come on Tuesday with your fair bride. Why can't you! Do. We are thankful to your sister for being of the party. Come, and *bring* a sonnet on Mary's birthday. Love to the whole Moxonry, and tell E. I every day love her more, and miss her less. Tell her so from her loving uncle, as she has let me call myself. I bought a fine embossed card yesterday, and wrote for the Pawnbrokeress's album. She is a Miss Brown, engaged to a Mr. White. One of the lines was (I forget the rest—but she had them at twenty-four hours' notice; she is going out to India with her husband):—

"May your fame
And fortune, Frances, WHITEN with your name!"

Not bad as a pun. I *wil* expect you before two on Tuesday. I am well and happy, tell E.

NOTE

[Moxon subsequently published his *Sonnets*, in two parts, one of which was dedicated to his brother and one to Wordsworth. There are several to his wife, so that it is difficult to identify that in which the last lines were to be altered. Mrs. Moxon's first album was an extract book in which Lamb had copied a number of old ballads and other poems.

I quote two of Moxon's sonnets. This is to the Ocean :—

Four days, wild Ocean, on thy troubled breast
A wanderer I have been! Swift cloud and wave
Have occupied my thoughts, intent to save
From pain my soul so far from its own rest.
Ye gallant winds, if e'er your lusty cheeks
Blew longing lover to his mistress' side,
O puff your loudest, spread the canvas wide
Of our too tardy bark! My whole heart speaks
In thus invoking you. Sweet Maid, with thee
Seated once more within my beechen grove,
The bower of graceful Emma and of love,
Glad I shall be, as he who from the sea
New lands beheld, or he of old who sat
And his bark saw rest safe on Ararat!

And this is one of many to Emma Moxon :—

Fair art thou as the morning, my young Bride!
Her freshness is about thee; like a river
To the sea gliding with sweet murmur ever
Thou sportest; and, wherever thou dost glide,
Humanity a livelier aspect wears.
Fair art thou as the morning of that land
Where Tuscan breezes in his youth have fanned
Thy grandsire oft. Thou hast not many tears,
Save such as pity from the heart will wring,
And then there is a smile in thy distress!
Meeker thou art than lily of the spring,
Yet is thy nature full of nobleness!
And gentle ways, that soothe and raise me so,
That henceforth I no worldly sorrow know!

"Heigh-ho! Little Barrow!" I cannot identify this acquaintance.

"Knowles's play"—"The Wife." Prologued by Lamb too.

"At Chatteris." I cannot say who were the teetotal, or abstinent Philistines.

"Mary's birthday." Mary Lamb would be sixty-nine on December 3, 1833.

Lamb's verses to Miss Brown seem to be no longer preserved. Mr. Hazlitt in his Bohn edition prints a letter to a Miss Frances Brown, which is not available for the present volume, wherein Lamb offers the verses, adding "I hope your sweetheart's name is WHITE. Else it would spoil all. May be 'tis BLACK. Then we must alter it. And may your fortunes BLACKEN with your name."]

LETTER 567

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES WENTWORTH DILKE.

[No date. Middle Dec., 1833.]

I HOPED R. would like his Sonnet, but I fear'd S. that *fine old man*, might not quite like the turn of it. This last was penn'd almost literally extempore.

YOUR LAUREAT.

Is S.'s Christian name Thomas? if not, correct it.

NOTE

["R."—Rogers; "S."—Stothard. See next letter.]

LETTER 568

CHARLES LAMB TO SAMUEL ROGERS

[No date. Probably Saturday, December 21, 1833.]

MY dear Sir,—Your book, by the unremitting punctuality of your publisher, has reached me thus early. I have not opened it, nor will till to-morrow, when I promise myself a thorough reading of it. "The Pleasures of Memory" was the first school present I made to Mrs. Moxon, it had those nice wood-cuts; and I believe she keeps it still. Believe me, that all the kindness you have shown to the husband of that excellent person seems done unto myself. I have tried my hand at a sonnet in "The Times." But the turn I gave it, though I hoped it would not displease you, I thought might not be equally agreeable to your artist. I met that dear old man at poor Henry's—with you—and again at Cary's—and it was sublime to see him sit deaf and enjoy all that was going on in mirth with the company. He reposed upon the many graceful, many fantastic images he had created; with them he dined and took wine.

I have ventured at an antagonist copy of verses in "The Athenæum" to *him*, in which he is as everything and you as nothing. He is no lawyer who cannot take two sides. But I am jealous of the combination of the sister arts. Let them sparkle apart. What injury (short of the theatres) did not Boydell's "Shakespeare Gallery" do me with Shakespeare?—to have Opie's Shakespeare, Northcote's Shakespeare, light-headed Fuseli's Shakespeare, heavy-headed Romney's Shakespeare, wooden-headed West's

Shakespeare (though he did the best in "Lear"), deaf-headed Reynolds's Shakespeare, instead of my, and everybody's Shakespeare. To be tied down to an authentic face of Juliet! To have Imogen's portrait! To confine the illimitable! I like you and Stothard (you best), but "out upon this half-faced fellowship." Sir, when I have read the book I may trouble you, through Moxon, with some faint criticisms. It is not the flatteringest compliment, in a letter to an author, to say you have not read his book yet. But the devil of a reader he must be who prances through it in five minutes, and no longer have I received the parcel. It was a little tantalizing to me to receive a letter from Landor, *Gebir* Landor, from Florence, to say he was just sitting down to read my "Elia," just received, but the letter was to go out before the reading. There are calamities in authorship which only authors know. I am going to call on Moxon on Monday, if the throng of carriages in Dover Street on the morn of publication do not barricade me out.

With many thanks, and most respectful remembrances to your sister,

Yours, C. Lamb.

Have you seen Coleridge's happy exemplification in English of the Ovidian elegiac metre?—

> In the Hexameter rises the fountain's silvery current,
> In the Pentameter aye falling in melody down.

My sister is papering up the book—careful soul!

Note

[Moxon published a superb edition of Rogers' *Poems* illustrated by Turner and Stothard. Lamb had received an advance copy. The sonnet to Rogers in *The Times* was printed on December 13, 1833. It ran thus:—

TO SAMUEL ROGERS, Esq., ON THE NEW EDITION OF HIS "PLEASURES OF MEMORY"

> When thy gay book hath paid its proud devoirs,
> Poetic friend, and fed with luxury
> The eye of pampered aristocracy
> In glittering drawing-rooms and gilt boudoirs,
> O'erlaid with comments of pictorial art,
> However rich and rare, yet nothing leaving
> Of healthful action to the soul-conceiving
> Of the true reader—yet a nobler part
> Awaits thy work, already classic styled.
> Cheap-clad, accessible, in homeliest show
> The modest beauty through the land shall go
> From year to year, and render life more mild;
> Refinement to the poor man's hearth shall give,
> And in the moral heart of England live.

C. Lamb.

Thomas Stothard, then in his seventy-ninth year, Lamb had met at Henry Rogers', who had died at Christmas, 1832. The following was the copy of verses printed in *The Athenæum*, December 21, 1833 ("that most romantic tale" was *Peter Wilkins*):—

TO T. STOTHARD, Esq.

On his Illustrations of the Poems of Mr. Rogers

Consummate Artist, whose undying name
With classic Rogers shall go down to fame,
Be this thy crowning work! In my young days
How often have I with a child's fond gaze
Pored on the pictured wonders thou hadst done:
Clarissa mournful, and prim Grandison!
All Fielding's, Smollett's heroes, rose to view;
I saw, and I believed the phantoms true.
But, above all, that most romantic tale
Did o'er my raw credulity prevail,
Where Glums and Gawries wear mysterious things,
That serve at once for jackets and for wings.
Age, that enfeebles other men's designs,
But heightens thine, and thy free draught refines.
In several ways distinct you make us feel—
Graceful as Raphael, as Watteau *genteel*.
Your lights and shades, as Titianesque, we praise;
And warmly wish you Titian's length of days.

"Short of the theatres." The injury done by the theatres is of course the subject of Lamb's *Reflector* essay on Shakespeare's Tragedies (see Vol. I., page 97).

"Boydell's 'Shakespeare Gallery'"—the series of 170 illustrations to Shakespeare by leading artists of the day projected by Alderman Boydell in 1786.

"Out upon this half-faced fellowship." Hotspur's phrase in 1 "Henry IV.," I., 3, 208.

"Coleridge's . . . exemplification." Lamb quoted incorrectly. The lines had just appeared in *Friendship's Offering* for 1834:—

In the hexameter rises the fountain's silvery column;
In the pentameter aye falling in melody back.

Coleridge took the lines from Schiller.

At Dr. Williams' Library is a note from Thos. Robinson to Crabb Robinson, dated December 22, 1833, concerning Lamb's Christmas turkey, which went first to Crabb Robinson at the Temple and was then sent on to Lamb, presumably with the note in the hamper. Lamb adds at the foot of the note:—

"The parcel coming thro' *you*, I open'd this note, but find no treason in it.

"With thanks

"C. Lamb."

I give here three other notes to Dilke, belonging probably to the early days of 1834. The first refers to the proof of one of Lamb's contributions to *The Athenæum*.]

LETTERS 569, 570 AND 571

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES WENTWORTH DILKE

[No date.]

I HAVE read the enclosed five and forty times over. I have submitted it to my Edmonton friends; at last (O Argus' penetration), I have discovered a dash that might be dispensed with. Pray don't trouble yourself with such useless courtesies. I can well trust your editor, when I don't use queer phrases which prove themselves wrong by creating a distrust in the sober compositor.

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES WENTWORTH DILKE

[No date.]

MAY I now claim of you the benefit of the loan of some books. Do not fear sending too many. But do not if it be irksome to yourself,—such as shall make you say, 'damn it, here's Lamb's box come again.' Dog's leaves ensured! Any light stuff: no natural history or useful learning, such as Pyramids, Catacombs, Giraffes, Adventures in Southern Africa, &c. &c.

With our joint compliments, yours,

C. LAMB.

Church Street, Edmonton.

Novels for the last two years, or further back—nonsense of any period.

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES WENTWORTH DILKE

[No date. Spring, 1834.]

DEAR Sir, I return 44 volumes by Tate. If they are not all your own, and some of mine have slipt in, I do not think you will lose much. Shall I go on with the Table talk? I will, if you like it, when the Culinary article has appear'd.

Robins, the Carrier, from the *Swan*, Snow Hill, will bring any more contributions, thankfully to be receiv'd—I pay backwards and forwards.

C. LAMB.

NOTE

["Table Talk by the late Elia" appeared in *The Athenæum* on January 4, May 31, June 7 and July 19, 1834. The Culinary article is the paragraph that now closes the "Table Talk" (see Vol. I., page 349).]

LETTER 572

CHARLES LAMB TO MARY BETHAM

January 24, 1834,
Church Street, Edmonton.

DEAR Mary Betham—I received the Bill, and when it is payable, some ten or twelve days hence, will punctually do with the overplus as you direct: I thought you would like to know it came to hand, so I have not waited for the uncertainty of when your nephew sets out. I suppose my receipt will serve, for poor Mary is not in a capacity to sign it. After being well from the end of July to the end of December, she was taken ill almost on the first day of the New Year, and is as bad as poor creature can be. I expect her fever to last 14 or 15 weeks—if she gets well at all, which every successive illness puts me in fear of. She has less and less strength to throw it off, and they leave a dreadful depression after them. She was quite comfortable a few weeks since, when Matilda came down here to see us.

You shall excuse a short letter, for my hand is unsteady. Indeed, the situation I am in with her shakes me sadly. She was quite able to appreciate the kind legacy while she was well. Imagine her kindest love to you, which is but buried awhile, and believe all the good wishes for your restoration to health from

C. LAMB.

NOTE

[This letter refers to the legacy mentioned on page 913. It had now been paid.]

LETTER 573

CHARLES LAMB TO EDWARD MOXON

[P.M. Jan. 28, 1834.]

I MET with a man at my half way house, who told me many anecdotes of Kean's younger life. He knew him thoroughly. His name is Wyatt, living near the Bell, Edmonton. Also he

referred me to West, a publican, opposite St. Georges Church, Southwark, who knew him *more* intimately. Is it worth while to enquire after them? C. L.

NOTE

[Edmund Kean had died in the previous May. Forster, who was at this time theatrical critic of *The Examiner*, was probably at work upon a biographical article.

Here should come a note from Lamb to Matilda Betham, dated January 29, 1834, not available for this edition (printed by Mr. Hazlitt in *The Lambs*). "My poor Mary is terribly ill again."

Here also, dated February 7, should come a letter to William Hone, printed by Mr. Macdonald, in which Lamb, after mentioning his sister's illness, urges upon Hone the advisability of applying to the Literary Fund for some relief, and offers to support him in his appeal.]

LETTERS 574 AND 575

CHARLES LAMB TO MISS FRYER

Feb. 14, 1834.

DEAR Miss Fryer,—Your letter found me just returned from keeping my birthday (pretty innocent!) at Dover-street. I see them pretty often. I have since had letters of business to write, or should have replied earlier. In one word, be less uneasy about me; I bear my privations very well; I am not in the depths of desolation, as heretofore. Your admonitions are not lost upon me. Your kindness has sunk into my heart. Have faith in me! It is no new thing for me to be left to my sister. When she is not violent, her rambling chat is better to me than the sense and sanity of this world. Her heart is obscured, not buried; it breaks out occasionally; and one can discern a strong mind struggling with the billows that have gone over it. I could be nowhere happier than under the same roof with her. Her memory is unnaturally strong; and from ages past, if we may so call the earliest records of our poor life, she fetches thousands of names and things that never would have dawned upon me again, and thousands from the ten years she lived before me. What took place from early girlhood to her coming of age principally lives again (every important thing and every trifle) in her brain with the vividness of real presence. For twelve hours incessantly she will pour out without intermission all her past life, forgetting nothing, pouring out name after name to the Waldens as a dream; sense and nonsense; truths and errors

huddled together; a medley between inspiration and possession. What things we are! I know you will bear with me, talking of these things. It seems to ease me; for I have nobody to tell these things to now. Emma, I see, has got a harp! and is learning to play. She has framed her three Walton pictures, and pretty they look. That is a book you should read; such sweet religion in it—next to Woolman's! though the subject be baits and hooks, and worms, and fishes. She has my copy at present to do two more from.

Very, very tired, I began this epistle, having been epistolising all the morning, and very kindly would I end it, could I find adequate expressions to your kindness. We did set our minds on seeing you in spring. One of us will indubitably. But I am not skilled in almanac learning, to know when spring precisely begins and ends. Pardon my blots; I am glad you like your book. I wish it had been half as worthy of your acceptance as "John Woolman." But 'tis a good-natured book.

NOTE

[Miss Fryer, who was first mentioned in Letter 562, was a school-fellow of Mrs. Moxon's.

I append another letter, undated, to the same lady. It belongs obviously to an earlier period, but the exact position is unimportant:—]

CHARLES LAMB TO MISS FRYER

[No date.]

MY dear Miss Fryer, By desire of Emma I have attempted new words to the old nonsense of Tartar Drum; but *with* the nonsense the sound and spirit of the tune are unaccountably gone, and *we* have agreed to discard the new version altogether. As *you* may be more fastidious in singing mere silliness, and a string of well-sounding images without sense or coherence—Drums of Tartars, who use *none*, and Tulip trees ten foot high, not to mention Spirits in Sunbeams &c,—than *we* are, so you are at liberty to sacrifice an enspiriting movement to a little sense, tho' I like LITTLE-SENSE less than his vagarying younger sister NO-SENSE—so I send them——

The 4th line of 1st stanza is from an old Ballad.

Emma is looking weller and handsomer (as you say) than ever. Really, if she goes on thus improving, by the time she is nine and thirty she will be a tolerable comely person. But I may not live

to see it.—I take Beauty to be *catching*—a Cholera sort of thing —Now, whether the constant presence of a handsome object—for there's only two of us—may not have the effect — — — but the subject is delicate, and as my old great Ant[1] used to say— "Andsome is as andsome duzz"—*that* was my great Ant's way of spelling——

Most and best kind things say to yourself and dear Mother for all your kindnesses to our Em., tho' in truth I am a little tired with her everlasting repetition of 'em. Yours very Truly,

CHS LAMB.

LOVE WILL COME

Tune: "The Tartar Drum"

I

Guard thy feelings, pretty Vestal,
From the smooth Intruder free;
Cage thine heart in bars of chrystal,
Lock it with a golden key:
Thro' the bars demurely stealing—
Noiseless footstep, accent dumb,
His approach to none revealing—
Watch, or watch not, LOVE WILL COME.

His approach to none revealing—
Watch, or watch not, Love will come—Love,
Watch, or watch not, Love will come.

II

Scornful Beauty may deny him—
He hath spells to charm disdain;
Homely Features may defy him—
Both at length must wear the chain.
Haughty Youth in Courts of Princes—
Hermit poor with age oercome—
His soft plea at last convinces;
Sooner, later, LOVE WILL COME—

His soft plea at length convinces;
Sooner, later, Love will come—Love,
Sooner, later, Love will come.

[1] Emma's way of spelling Miss *Umfris*, as I spell her *Aunt*.

LETTER 576

CHARLES LAMB TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Church St., Edmonton,
22 feb. [1834].

DEAR Wordsworth, I write from a house of mourning. The oldest and best friends I have left, are in trouble. A branch of them (and they of the best stock of God's creatures, I believe) is

establishing a school at Carlisle. Her name is Louisa Martin, her address 75 Castle Street, Carlisle; her qualities (and her motives for this exertion) are the most amiable, most upright. For thirty years she has been tried by me, and on her behaviour I would stake my soul. O if you can recommend her, how would I love you—if I could love you better. Pray, pray, recommend her. She is as good a human creature,—next to my Sister, perhaps the most exemplary female I ever knew. Moxon tells me, you would like a Letter from me. You shall have one. *This* I cannot mingle up with any nonsense which you usually tolerate from, C. LAMB. Need he add loves to Wife, Sister, and all? Poor Mary is ill again, after a short lucid interval of 4 or 5 months. In short, I may call her half dead to me.

Good you are to me. Yours with fervor of friendship; for ever

turn over

If you want references, the Bishop of Carlisle may be one. Louisa's Sister, (as good as she, she cannot be better tho' she tries,) educated the daughters of the late Earl of Carnarvon, and he settled a handsome Annuity on her for life. In short all the family are a sound rock. The present Lord Carnarvon married Howard of Graystock's Sister.

NOTE

[Wordsworth has written on the wrapper, "Lamb's last letter."

We met the Martins in the early correspondence. It was Louisa whom, many years before, Lamb used to call "Monkey" (see particularly Letter 138 to Hazlitt, on page 323).

Here should come Lamb's last letter to Thomas Manning, dated May 10, 1834, not available for this edition (printed by Canon Ainger). Mary has, he says, been ill for nigh twenty weeks; "she is, I hope, recovering." "I struggle to town rarely, and then to see London, with little other motive—for what is left there hardly? The streets and shops entertaining ever, else I feel as in a desert, and get me home to my cave." Once a month, he adds, he passes a day with Cary at the Museum. When Mary was getting better in the previous year she would read all the auctioneers' advertisements on the walk. "These are *my* Play-bills," she said. "I walk 9 or 10 miles a day, always up the road, dear Londonwards." Addressed to Manning at Puckeridge.

Manning lived on, an eccentric recluse, until 1840.]

LETTER 577

(Fragment)

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE

[No date. End of June, 1834.]

WE heard the Music in the Abbey at Winchmore Hill! and the notes were incomparably soften'd by the distance. Novello's chromatics were distinctly audible. Clara was faulty in B flat. Otherwise she sang like an angel. The trombone, and Beethoven's walzes, were the best. Who played the oboe?

NOTE

[The letter refers to the performance of Handel's "Creation" at the Musical Festival in Westminster Abbey on June 24, 1834, when Novello and Atwood were the organists, and Clara Novello (now Countess Gigliucci) was one of the singers.]

LETTER 578

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN FORSTER

[P.M. June 25, 1834.]

DR F.—I simply sent for the Miltons because Alsop has some Books of mine, and I thought they might travel with them. But keep 'em as much longer as you like. I never trouble my head with other people's quarrels, I do not always understand my own. I seldom see them in Dover Street. I know as little as the Man in the Moon about your joint transactions, and care as little. If you have lost a little portion of my "good will," it is that you do not come and see me. Arrange with Procter, when you have done with your moving accidents.

Yours, ambulaturus,
C. L.

LETTER 579

CHARLES LAMB TO J. FULLER RUSSELL

[Summer, 1834.]

MR Lamb's compts and shall be happy to look over the lines as soon as ever Mr. Russell shall send them. He is at *Mr.* Walden's, Church, *not Bury*—St, Edmd.

Line 10. "Ween," and "wist," and "wot," and "eke" are antiquated frippery, and unmodernize a poem rather than give it an antique air, as some strong old words may do. "I guess," "I know," "I knew," are quite as significant.

31. Why "ee"—barbarous Scoticism!—when "eye" is much better and chimes to "cavalry"? A sprinkling of disused words where all the style else is after the approved recent fashion teases and puzzles.

37. [Anon the storm begins to slake,
The sullen clouds to melt away,
The moon becalmed in a blue lake
Looks down with melancholy ray.]

The moon becalmed in a blue lake would be more apt to *look up*. I see my error—the sky is the lake—and beg you to laugh at it.

59. What is a maiden's "een," south of the Tweed? You may as well call her prettily turned ears her "lugs."

"On the maiden's lugs they fall" (verse 79).

144. "A coy young Miss" will never do. For though you are presumed to be a modern, writing only of days of old, yet you should not write a word purely unintelligible to your heroine. Some understanding should be kept up between you. "Miss" is a nickname not two centuries old; came in at about the Restoration. The "King's Misses" is the oldest use of it I can remember. It is Mistress Anne Page, not Miss Page. Modern names and usages should be kept out of sight in an old subject. W. Scott was sadly faulty in this respect.

208. [Tear of sympathy.] Pity's sacred dew. Sympathy is a young lady's word, rife in modern novels, and is almost always wrongly applied. To sympathize is to feel *with*, not simply *for* another. I write verses and *sympathize* with you. You have the tooth ache, I have *not*; I feel for you, I cannot sympathize.

243. What is "sheen"? Has it more significance than "bright"? Richmond in its old name was Shene. Would you call an omnibus to take you to Shene? How the "all's right" man would stare!

363. [The violet nestled in the shade,
Which fills with perfume all the glade,
Yet bashful as a timid maid
Thinks to elude the searching eye
Of every stranger passing by,
Might well compare with Emily.]

A strangely involved simile. The maiden is likend [*sic*] to a *violet* which has been just before likened to a *maid*. Yet it reads prettily, and I would not have it alter'd.

420. "Een" come again? In line 407 you speak it out "eye," bravely like an Englishman.

468. Sorceresses do not entice by wrinkles, but, being essentially aged, appear in assumed beauty.

NOTE

[This communication and that which follows (with trifling omissions) were sent to *Notes and Queries* by the late Mr. J. Fuller Russell, F.S.A., with this explanation: "I was residing at Enfield in the Cambridge Long Vacation, 1834, and—perhaps to the neglect of more improving pursuits—composed a metrical novel, named 'Emily de Wilton,' in three parts. When the first of them was completed, I ventured to introduce myself to Charles Lamb (who was living at Edmonton at the time), and telling him what I had done, and that I had 'scarcely heart to proceed until I had obtained the opinion of a competent judge respecting my verses,' I asked him to 'while away an idle hour in their perusal,' adding, 'I fear you will think me very rude and very intrusive, but I am one of the most nervous souls in Christendom.' Moved, possibly, by this diffident (not to say unusual) confession, Elia speedily gave his consent."

The poem was never printed. Lamb's pains in this matter serve to show how kindly disposed he was in these later years to all young men; and how exact a sense of words he had.

In the British Museum is preserved a sheet of similar comments made by Lamb upon a manuscript of P. G. Patmore's, from which I have quoted a few passages on page 737. In *Charles Lamb and the Lloyds* will also be found a number of interesting criticisms on a translation of Homer, to which reference is made on pages 402 and 413.]

LETTER 580

CHARLES LAMB TO J. FULLER RUSSELL

[Summer, 1834.]

SIR,—I hope you will finish "Emily." The story I cannot at this stage anticipate. Some looseness of diction I have taken liberty to advert to. It wants a little more severity of style. There are too many prettinesses, but parts of the Poem are better than pretty, and I thank you for the perusal.

Your humble Servt.

C. LAMB.

Perhaps you will favour me with a call while you stay.

Line 42. "The old abbaye" (if abbey *was* so spelt) I do not object to, because it does not seem your own language, but humoursomely adapted to the "how folks called it in those times."

82. "Flares"! Think of the vulgarism "flare up;" let it be "burns."

112. [In her pale countenance is blent
The majesty of high intent
With meekness by devotion lent,
And when she bends in prayer
Before the Virgin's awful shrine,—
The rapt enthusiast might deem
The seraph of his brightest dream,
Were meekly kneeling there.]

"Was" decidedly, not "were." The deeming or supposition, is of a reality, not a contingency. The enthusiast does not deem that a thing may be, but that it *is*.

118. [When first young Vernon's flight she knew,
The lady deemed the tale untrue.]

"Deemed"! This word is just repeated above; say "thought" or "held." "Deem" is half-cousin to "ween" and "wot."

143. [By pure intent and soul sincere
Sustained and nerved, I will not fear
Reproach, shame, scorn, the taunting jeer,
And worse than all, a father's sneer.]

A father's "sneer"? Would a high-born man in those days *sneer* at a daughter's disgrace—would he *only* sneer?

Reproach, and biting shame, and—worse
Than all—the estranged father's curse.

I only throw this hint out in a hurry.

177. "Stern and *sear*"? I see a meaning in it, but no word is good that startles one at first, and then you have to make it out: "drear," perhaps. Then why "to minstrel's glance"? "To fancy's eye," you would say, not "to fiddler's eye."

422. A knight thinks, he don't "trow."

424. "Mayhap" is vulgarish. Perchance.

464. "Sensation" is a philosophic prose word. Feeling.

27. [The hill, where ne'er rang woodman's stroke,
Was clothed with elm and spreading oak,
Through whose black boughs the moon's mild ray
As hardly strove to win a way,
As pity to a miser's heart.]

Natural illustrations come more naturally when by *them* we expound mental operations than when we deduce from natural objects similes of the mind's workings. The miser's struggle thus com-

pared is a beautiful image. But the storm and clouds do not inversely so readily suggest the miser.

160. [Havock and Wrath, his maniac bride,
Wheel o'er the conflict, &c.]

These personified gentry I think are not in taste. Besides, Fear has been pallid any time these 2,000 years. It is mixing the style of Æschylus and the *Last Minstrel*.

175. Bracy is a good rough vocative. No better suggests itself, unless Grim, Baron Grimm, or Grimoald, which is Saxon, or Grimbald! Tracy would obviate your objection [that the name Bracy occurs in *Ivanhoe*] but Bracy is stronger.

231. [The frown of night
Conceals him, and bewrays their sight.]

Betrays. The other has an *unlucky association*.

243. [The glinting moon's half-shrouded ray.]

Why "glinting," Scotch, when "glancing" is English?

421. [Then solemnly the monk did say,
(The Abbot of Saint Mary's gray,)
The leman of a wanton youth
Perhaps may gain her father's *ruth*,
But *never* on his injured breast
May lie, caressing and caressed.
Bethink you of the vow you made
When your light daughter, all distraught,
From yonder slaughter-plain was brought,
That if in some secluded cell
She might till death securely dwell,
The house of God should share her wealth.]

Holy abbots surely never so undisguisedly blurted out their secular aims.

I think there is so much of this kind of poetry, that it would not be *very taking*, but it is well worthy of pleasing a private circle. One blemish runs thro', the perpetual accompaniment of natural images. Seasons of the year, times of day, phases of the moon, phenomena of flowers, are quite as much your *dramatis personæ* as the warriors and the ladies. This last part is as good as what precedes.

LETTER 581

CHARLES LAMB TO CHARLES WENTWORTH DILKE

[No date. End of July, 1834.]

DEAR Sir, I am totally incapable of doing what you suggest at present, and think it right to tell you so *without delay*. It would shock me, who am shocked enough already, to sit down to

write about it. I have no letters of poor C. By and bye what scraps I have shall be yours. Pray excuse me. It is not for want of obliging you, I assure you. For your Box we most cordially feel thankful. I shall be your debtor in my poor way. I do assure you I am incapable.

Again, excuse me
Yours sincerely
C. L.

NOTE

[Coleridge's death had occurred on July 25, in his sixty-second year; and Dilke had written to Lamb asking for some words on that event, for *The Athenæum*. A little while later a request was made by John Forster that Lamb would write something for the album of a Mr. Keymer. It was then that Lamb wrote the few words that stand under the title "On the Death of Coleridge" (see Vol. I., page 351). Forster wrote thus of the effect of Coleridge's death upon Lamb:—

> He thought of little else (his sister was but another portion of himself) until his own great spirit joined his friend. He had a habit of venting his melancholy in a sort of mirth. He would, with nothing graver than a pun, "cleanse his bosom of the perilous stuff that weighed" upon it. In a jest, or a few light phrases, he would lay open the last recesses of his heart. So in respect of the death of Coleridge. Some old friends of his saw him two or three weeks ago, and remarked the constant turning and reference of his mind. He interrupted himself and them almost every instant with some play of affected wonder, or astonishment, or humorous melancholy, on the words, "*Coleridge is dead.*" Nothing could divert him from that, for the thought of it never left him.

Wordsworth said that Coleridge's death hastened Lamb's.]

LETTER 582

CHARLES LAMB TO REV. JAMES GILLMAN

Mr. Walden's, Church Street,
Edmonton, August 5, 1834.

MY dear Sir,—The sad week being over, I must write to you to say, that I was glad of being spared from attending; I have no words to express my feeling with you all. I can only say that when you think a short visit from me would be acceptable, when your father and mother shall be able to see me *with comfort*, I will come to the bereaved house. Express to them my tenderest regards and hopes that they will continue our friends still. We both love and respect them as much as a human being can, and finally thank them with our hearts for what they have been to the poor departed.

God bless you all, C. LAMB.

NOTE

[Talfourd writes: "Shortly after, assured that his presence would be welcome, Lamb went to Highgate. There he asked leave to see the nurse who had attended upon Coleridge; and being struck and affected by the feeling she manifested towards his friend, insisted on her receiving five guineas from him."]

LETTER 583

CHARLES AND MARY LAMB TO H. F. CARY

Sept. 12, 1834.

"By Cot's plessing we will not be absence at the grace."

DEAR C.,—We long to see you, and hear account of your peregrinations, of the Tun at Heidelburg, the Clock at Strasburg, the statue at Rotterdam, the dainty Rhenish and poignant Moselle wines, Westphalian hams, and Botargoes of Altona. But perhaps you have seen nor tasted any of these things.

Yours, very glad to claim you back again to your proper centre, books and Bibliothecæ, C. AND M. LAMB.

I have only got your note just now *per negligentiam periniqui Moxoni.*

NOTE

["By Cot's plessing . . ."—Sir Hugh Evans, in "The Merry Wives of Windsor."

Charles and Mary Lamb at this time were supposed to dine at Cary's on the third Wednesday in every month. When the plan was suggested by Cary Lamb was for declining, but Mary Lamb said, "Ah, when we went to Edmonton, I told Charles that something would turn up, and so it did, you see."

"*Per negligentiam . . .*" Owing to the neglect of the most unrighteous Moxon.]

LETTER 584

CHARLES LAMB TO H. F. CARY

Oct., 1834.

I PROTEST I know not in what words to invest my sense of the shameful violation of hospitality, which I was guilty of on that fatal Wednesday. Let it be blotted from the calendar. Had

it been committed at a layman's house, say a merchant's or manufacturer's, a cheesemonger's or greengrocer's, or, to go higher, a barrister's, a member of Parliament's, a rich banker's, I should have felt alleviation, a drop of self-pity. But to be seen deliberately to go out of the house of a clergyman drunk! a clergyman of the Church of England too! not that alone, but of an expounder of that dark Italian Hierophant, an exposition little short of *his* who dared unfold the Apocalypse: divine riddles both and (without supernal grace vouchsafed) Arks not to be fingered without present blasting to the touchers. And, then, from what house! Not a common glebe or vicarage (which yet had been shameful), but from a kingly repository of sciences, human and divine, with the primate of England for its guardian, arrayed in public majesty, from which the profane vulgar are bid fly. Could all those volumes have taught me nothing better! With feverish eyes on the succeeding dawn I opened upon the faint light, enough to distinguish, in a strange chamber not immediately to be recognised, garters, hose, waistcoat, neckerchief, arranged in dreadful order and proportion, which I knew was not mine own. 'Tis the common symptom, on awaking, I judge my last night's condition from. A tolerable scattering on the floor I hail as being too probably my own, and if the candlestick be not removed, I assoil myself. But this finical arrangement, this finding everything in the morning in exact diametrical rectitude, torments me. By whom was I divested? Burning blushes! not by the fair hands of nymphs, the Buffam Graces? Remote whispers suggested that I *coached* it home in triumph—far be that from working pride in me, for I was unconscious of the locomotion; that a young Mentor accompanied a reprobate old Telemachus; that, the Trojan like, he bore his charge upon his shoulders, while the wretched incubus, in glimmering sense, hiccuped drunken snatches of flying on the bats' wings after sunset. An aged servitor was also hinted at, to make disgrace more complete: one, to whom my ignominy may offer further occasions of revolt (to which he was before too fondly inclining) from the true faith; for, at a sight of my helplessness, what more was needed to drive him to the advocacy of independency? Occasion led me through Great Russell Street yesterday. I gazed at the great knocker. My feeble hands in vain essayed to lift it. I dreaded that Argus Portitor, who doubtless lanterned me out on that prodigious night. I called the Elginian marbles. They were cold to my suit. I shall never again, I said, on the wide gates unfolding, say without fear of thrusting back, in a light but a peremptory air, "I am going to Mr. Cary's." I passed by the walls of Balclutha. I had imaged to myself a zodiac of third Wednesdays irradiating by glimpses the Edmonton dulness. I dreamed of Highmore! I am

de-vited to come on Wednesdays. Villanous old age that, with second childhood, brings linked hand in hand her inseparable twin, new inexperience, which knows not effects of liquor. Where I was to have sate for a sober, middle-aged-and-a-half gentleman, literary too, the neat-fingered artist can educe no notions but of a dissolute Silenus, lecturing natural philosophy to a jeering Chromius or a Mnasilus. Pudet. From the context gather the lost name of ——.

NOTE

["The Buffam Graces." Lamb's landladies at Southampton Buildings.

"Bats' wings"—Ariel's song again.

"I passed by the walls of Balclutha." From Ossian. Lamb uses this quotation in his *Elia* essay on the South-Sea House.

"Highmore." I cannot explain this reference.

"Silenus . . ." In Virgil's sixth eclogue Silenus, found in a drunken sleep by Chromius and Mnasylos, is bound by them. He sang to them of the creation of the world.

Not long before Mrs. Procter's death a letter from Charles Lamb to Mrs. Basil Montagu was sold, in which Lamb apologised for having become intoxicated while visiting her the night before. Some one mentioned the letter in Mrs. Procter's presence. "Ah," she said, "but they haven't seen the second letter, which I have upstairs, written next day, in which he said that my mother might ask him again with safety as he never got drunk twice in the same house." Unhappily, a large number of Lamb's and other letters were burned by Mrs. Procter.]

LETTER 585

CHARLES LAMB TO H. F. CARY

[Oct. 18, 1834.]

DEAR Sir,—The unbounded range of munificence presented to my choice staggers me. What can twenty votes do for one hundred and two widows? I cast my eyes hopeless among the viduage. N.B.—Southey might be ashamed of himself to let his aged mother stand at the top of the list, with his £100 a year and butt of sack. Sometimes I sigh over No. 12, Mrs. Carve-ill, some poor relation of mine, no doubt. No. 15 has my wishes; but then she is a Welsh one. I have Ruth upon No. 21. I'd tug hard for No. 24. No. 25 is an anomaly: there can be no Mrs. Hogg. No. 34 ensnares me. No. 73 should not have met so foolish a person.

No. 92 may bob it as she likes; but she catches no cherry of me. So I have even fixed at hap-hazard, as you'll see.

Yours, every third Wednesday, C. L.

NOTE

[Talfourd states that the note is in answer to a letter enclosing a list of candidates for a Widow's Fund Society, for which he was entitled to vote. A Mrs. Southey headed the list.

Here, according to Mr. Hazlitt's dating, should come a note from Lamb to Mrs. Randal Norris, belonging to November, not available for this edition (printed in *The Lambs*), in which Lamb says that he found Mary on his return no worse and she is now no better. He sends all his nonsense that he can scrape together and hopes the young ladies will like "Amwell" (*Mrs. Leicester's School*).]

LETTER 586

CHARLES LAMB TO MR. CHILDS

Monday. Church Street, EDMONTON (not Enfield, as you erroneously direct yours). [? Dec., 1834.]

DEAR Sir,—The volume which you seem to want, is not to be had for love or money. I with difficulty procured a copy for myself. Yours is gone to enlighten the tawny Hindoos. What a supreme felicity to the author (only he is no traveller) on the Ganges or Hydaspes (Indian streams) to meet a smutty Gentoo ready to burst with laughing at the tale of Bo-Bo! for doubtless it hath been translated into all the dialects of the East. I grieve the less, that Europe should want it. I cannot gather from your letter, whether you are aware that a second series of the Essays is published by Moxon, in Dover-street, Piccadilly, called "The Last Essays of Elia," and, I am told, is not inferior to the former. Shall I order a copy for you, and will you accept it? Shall I *lend* you, at the same time, my sole copy of the former volume (Oh! return it) for a month or two? In return, you shall favour me with the loan of one of those Norfolk-bred grunters that you laud so highly; I promise not to keep it above a day. What a funny name Bungay is! I never dreamt of a correspondent thence. I used to think of it as some Utopian town or borough in Gotham land. I now believe in its existence, as part of merry England!

[*Some lines scratched out.*]

The part I have scratched out is the best of the letter. Let me have your commands.

CH. LAMB, *alias* ELIA.

NOTE

[Talfourd thus explains this letter: "In December, 1834, Mr. Lamb received a letter from a gentleman, a stranger to him—Mr. Childs of Bungay, whose copy of *Elia* had been sent on an Oriental voyage, and who, in order to replace it, applied to Mr. Lamb." Mr. Childs was a printer. His business subsequently became that of Messrs. R. & R. Clark, which still flourishes. See Appendix II., page 978, for a further note to Mr. Childs.

This letter practically disposes of the statement made by more than one bibliographer that a second edition of *Elia* was published in 1833. The tale of Bo-Bo is in the "Dissertation on Roast Pig."

"Ganges or Hydaspes." Milton's line, *Paradise Lost*, III., 436.]

LETTER 587

CHARLES LAMB TO MRS. GEORGE DYER

Dec. 22nd, 1834.

DEAR Mrs. Dyer,—I am very uneasy about a *Book* which I either have lost or left at your house on Thursday. It was the book I went out to fetch from Miss Buffam's, while the tripe was frying. It is called Phillip's Theatrum Poetarum; but it is an English book. I think I left it in the parlour. It is Mr. Cary's book, and I would not lose it for the world. Pray, if you find it, book it at the Swan, Snow Hill, by an Edmonton stage immediately, directed to Mr. Lamb, Church-street, Edmonton, or write to say you cannot find it. I am quite anxious about it. If it is lost, I shall never like tripe again.

With kindest love to Mr. Dyer and all,

Yours truly,

C. LAMB.

NOTE

[This is the last letter of Charles Lamb, who tripped and fell in Church Street, Edmonton, on December 22, and died of erysipelas on December 27.

In the life of H. F. Cary by his son we read: "He [Lamb] had borrowed of my father Phillips's *Theatrum Poetarum Anglicanorum*, which was returned by Lamb's friend, Mr. Moxon, with the leaf folded down at the account of Sir Philip Sydney." Mr. Cary acknowledged the receipt of the book by the following

LINES TO THE MEMORY OF CHARLES LAMB

So should it be, my gentle friend;
Thy leaf last closed at Sydney's end.
Thou too, like Sydney, wouldst have given
The water, thirsting and near heaven;
Nay were it wine, fill'd to the brim,
Thou hadst look'd hard, but given, like him.

And art thou mingled then among
Those famous sons of ancient song?
And do they gather round, and praise
Thy relish of their nobler lays?
Waxing in mirth to hear thee tell
With what strange mortals thou didst dwell!
At thy quaint sallies more delighted,
Than any's long among them lighted!

'Tis done: and thou hast join'd a crew,
To whom thy soul was justly due;
And yet I think, where'er thou be,
They'll scarcely love thee more than we.

At the time of his death Lamb was sixty, all but a few weeks.

Mary Lamb, with occasional lapses into sound health, survived him until May 20, 1847. At first she continued to live at Edmonton, but a few years later moved to the house of Mrs. Parsons, sister of her old nurse, Miss James, in St. John's Wood. I append three letters, two written, and one inspired, by her, to Miss Jane Norris, one of the daughters of Randal Norris. Of the friends mentioned therein I might add that Edward Moxon lived until 1858; Mrs. Edward Moxon until 1891; James Kenney until 1849; Thomas Hood until 1845; and Barron Field until 1846.]

LETTERS 588, 589 AND 590

MARY LAMB TO JANE NORRIS

[41 Alpha Road, Regent's Park] Christmas Day [1841].

MY dear Jane,—Many thanks for your kind presents—your Michalmas goose. I thought Mr. Moxon had written to thank you—the turkeys and nice apples came yesterday.

Give my love to your dear Mother. I was unhappy to find your note in the basket, for I am always thinking of you all, and wondering when I shall ever see any of you again.

I long to shew you what a nice snug place I have got into—in the midst of a pleasant little garden. I have a room for myself and my old books on the ground floor, and a little bedroom up

two pairs of stairs. When you come to town, if you have not time to go [to] the Moxons, an Omnibus from the Bell and Crown in Holborn would [bring] you to our door in [a] quarter of an hour. If your dear Mother does not venture so far, I will contrive to pop down to see [her]. Love and all seasonable wishes to your sister and Mary, &c. I am in the midst of many friends—Mr. & Mrs. Kenney, Mr. & Mrs. Hood, Bar[r]on Field & his brother Frank, & their wives &c., all within a short walk.

If the lodger is gone, I shall have a bedroom will hold two! Heaven bless & preserve you all in health and happiness many a long year.

Yours affectionately,

M. A. Lamb.

MARY LAMB TO JANE NORRIS

Oct. 3, 1842.

My dear Jane Norris,—Thanks, many thanks, my dear friend, for your kind remembrances. What a nice Goose! That, and all its accompaniments in the basket, we all devoured; the two legs fell to my share! ! !

Your chearful [letter,] my Jane, made me feel "almost as good as new."

Your Mother and I *must meet again*. Do not be surprized if I pop in again for a half-hour's call some fine frosty morning.

Thank you, dear Jane, for the happy tidings that my *old* friend Miss Bangham is alive, an[d] that Mary is still with you, unmarried. Heaven bless you all.

Love to Mother, *Betsey*, Mary, &c. How I do long to see you.

I am always your affecately grateful friend,

Mary Ann Lamb.

MISS JAMES TO JANE NORRIS

41 Alpha Road, Regent's Park,
London, July 25, 1843.

Madam,—Miss Lamb, having seen the Death of your dear Mother in the Times News Paper, is most anxious to hear from or to see one of you, as she wishes to know how you intend settling yourselves, and to have a full account of your dear Mother's last illness. She was much shocked on reading of her death, and appeared very vexed that she had not been to see her, [and] wanted

very much to come down and see you both; but we were really afraid to let her take the journey. If either of you are coming up to town, she would be glad if you would call upon her, but should you not be likely to come soon, she would be very much pleased if one of you would have the goodness to write a few lines to her, as she is most anxious about you. She begs you to excuse her writing to you herself, as she don't feel equal to it; she asked me yesterday to write for her. I am happy to say she is at present pretty well, although your dear Mother's death appears to dwell much upon her mind. She desires her kindest love to you both, and hopes to hear from you very soon, if you are equal to writing. I sincerely hope you will oblige her, and am,

Madam,

Your obedient, &c.,

SARAH JAMES.

Pray don't invite her to come down to see you.

APPENDIX I

NSISTING OF THE LONGER PASSAGES FROM BOOKS REFERRED TO BY LAMB IN HIS LETTERS

COLERIDGE'S "ODE ON THE DEPARTING YEAR"

TEXT OF THE QUARTO, 1796

(*See Letter* 19, *page* 75)

STROPHE I

Spirit, who sweepest the wild Harp of Time,
It is most hard with an untroubled Ear
Thy dark inwoven Harmonies to hear!
Yet, mine eye fixt on Heaven's unchanged clime,
Long had I listen'd, free from mortal fear,
With inward stillness and a bowed mind:
When lo! far onwards waving on the wind
I saw the skirts of the DEPARTING YEAR!
Starting from my silent sadness
Then with no unholy madness,
Ere yet the entered cloud forbade my sight,
I rais'd th' impetuous song, and solemnized his flight.

STROPHE II

Hither from the recent Tomb;
From the Prison's direr gloom;
From Poverty's heart-wasting languish:
From Distemper's midnight anguish;
Or where his two bright torches blending
Love illumines Manhood's maze;
Or where o'er cradled Infants bending
Hope has fix'd her wishful gaze:
Hither, in perplexed dance,
Ye WOES, and young-eyed JOYS, advance!
By Time's wild harp, and by the Hand
Whose indefatigable Sweep
Forbids its fateful strings to sleep,
I bid you haste, a mixt tumultuous band!
From every private bower,
And each domestic hearth,
Haste for one solemn hour;

And with a loud and yet a louder voice
O'er the sore travail of the common earth
Weep and rejoice!
Seiz'd in sore travail and portentous birth
(Her eye-balls flashing a pernicious glare)
Sick NATURE struggles! Hark—her pangs increase!
Her groans are horrible! But ô! most fair
The promis'd Twins, she bears—EQUALITY and PEACE!

EPODE

I mark'd Ambition in his war-array:
I heard the mailed Monarch's troublous cry—
"Ah! whither [wherefore] does the Northern Conqueress stay?
Groans not her Chariot o'er its onward way?"
Fly, mailed Monarch, fly!
Stunn'd by Death's "twice mortal" mace
No more on MURDER's lurid face
Th' insatiate Hag shall glote with drunken eye!
Manes of th' unnumbered Slain!
Ye that gasp'd on WARSAW's plain!
Ye that erst at ISMAIL's tower,
When human Ruin chok'd the streams,
Fell in Conquest's glutted hour
Mid Women's shrieks and Infant's screams;
Whose shrieks, whose screams were vain to stir
Loud-laughing, red-eyed Massacre!
Spirits of th' uncoffin'd Slain,
Sudden blasts of Triumph swelling
Oft at night, in misty train
Rush around her narrow Dwelling!
Th' exterminating Fiend is fled—
(Foul her Life and dark her Doom!)
Mighty Army of the Dead,
Dance, like Death-fires, round her Tomb!
Then with prophetic song relate
Each some scepter'd Murderer's fate!
When shall scepter'd SLAUGHTER cease?
Awhile He crouch'd, O Victor France!
Beneath the light'ning of thy Lance,
With treacherous dalliance wooing PEACE.
But soon up-springing from his dastard trance
The boastful, bloody Son of Pride betray'd
His hatred of the blest and blessing Maid.
One cloud, O Freedom! cross'd thy orb of Light
And sure, he deem'd, that Orb was quench'd in night:
For still does MADNESS roam on GUILT's bleak dizzy height!

ANTISTROPHE I

DEPARTING YEAR! 'twas on no earthly shore
My Soul beheld thy Vision. Where, alone,
Voiceless and stern, before the Cloudy Throne
Aye MEMORY sits; there, garmented with gore,
With many an unimaginable groan
Thou storiedst thy sad Hours! Silence ensued:
Deep Silence o'er th' etherial Multitude,
Whose purple Locks with snow-white Glories shone.
Then, his eye wild ardors glancing,
From the choired Gods advancing,
The SPIRIT of the EARTH made reverence meet
And stood up beautiful before the Cloudy Seat!

ANTISTROPHE II

On every Harp, on every Tongue
While the mute Enchantment hung;
Like Midnight from a thundercloud,
Spake the sudden SPIRIT loud—
"Thou in stormy blackness throning
"Love and uncreated Light,
"By the Earth's unsolac'd groaning
"Seize thy terrors, Arm of Might!
"By Belgium's corse-impeded flood!
"By Vendee steaming Brother's blood!
"By PEACE with proffer'd insult scar'd,
"Masked hate, and envying scorn!
"By Tears of Havoc yet unborn;
"And Hunger's bosom to the frost-winds bar'd!
"But chief by Afric's wrongs
"Strange, horrible, and foul!
"By what deep Guilt belongs
"To the deaf Synod, 'full of gifts and lies!'
"By Wealth's insensate Laugh! By Torture's Howl!
"Avenger, rise!
"For ever shall the bloody Island scowl?
"For aye unbroken, shall her cruel Bow
"Shoot Famine's arrows o'er thy ravag'd World?
"Hark! how wide NATURE joins her groans below—
"Rise, God of Nature, rise! Why sleep thy Bolts unhurl'd?"

EPODE II

The Voice had ceas'd, the Phantoms fled,
Yet still I gasp'd and reel'd with dread.
And even when the dream of night
Renews the vision to my sight,
Cold sweat-damps gather on my limbs,
My Ears throb hot, my eye-balls start,
My Brain with horrid tumult swims,
Wild is the Tempest of my Heart;
And my thick and struggling breath
Imitates the toil of Death!
No uglier agony confounds
The Soldier on the war-field spread,
When all foredone with toil and wounds
Death-like he dozes among heaps of Dead!
(The strife is o'er, the day-light fled,
And the Night-wind clamours hoarse;
See! the startful Wretch's head
Lies pillow'd on a Brother's Corse!)
O doom'd to fall, enslav'd and vile,
O ALBION! O my mother Isle!
Thy valleys, fair as Eden's bowers,
Glitter green with sunny showers;
Thy grassy Upland's gentle Swells
Echo to the Bleat of Flocks;
(Those grassy Hills, those glitt'ring Dells
Proudly ramparted with rocks)
And Ocean 'mid his uproar wild
Speaks safely to his Island-child.
Hence for many a fearless age
Has social Quiet lov'd thy shore;
Nor ever sworded Foeman's rage

Or sack'd thy towers, or stain'd thy fields with gore.
Disclaim'd of Heaven! mad Av'rice at thy side,
At coward distance, yet with kindling pride—
Safe 'mid thy herds and corn-fields thou hast stood,
And join'd the yell of Famine and of Blood.
All nations curse thee: and with eager wond'ring
Shall hear DESTRUCTION like a vulture, scream!
Strange-eyed DESTRUCTION, who with many a dream
Of central flames thro' nether seas upthund'ring
Soothes her fierce solitude, yet (as she lies
Stretch'd on the marge of some fire-flashing fount
In the black chamber of a sulphur'd mount,)
If ever to her lidless dragon eyes,
O ALBION! thy predestin'd ruins rise,
The Fiend-hag on her perilous couch doth leap,
Mutt'ring distemper'd triumph in her charmed sleep.

Away, my soul, away!
In vain, in vain, the birds of warning sing—
And hark! I hear the famin'd brood of prey
Flap their lank pennons on the groaning wind!
Away, my Soul, away!
I unpartaking of the evil thing,
With daily prayer, and daily toil
Soliciting my scant and blameless soil,
Have wail'd my country with a loud lament.
Now I recenter my immortal mind
In the long sabbath of high self-content;
Cleans'd from the fleshly Passions that bedim
God's Image, Sister of the Seraphim.

WITHER'S "*SUPERSEDEAS* TO ALL THEM, WHOSE CUSTOME IT IS, WITHOUT ANY DESERVING, TO IMPORTUNE *AUTHORS* TO GIVE UNTO THEM THEIR *BOOKES*"

FROM *A COLLECTION OF EMBLEMS*, 1635

(*See Letter* 35, *page* 124)

It merits not your Anger, nor my Blame,
That, thus I have inscrib'd this *Epigram:*
For, they who know me, know, that, *Bookes* thus large,
And, fraught with *Emblems*, do augment the Charge
Too much above my *Fortunes*, to afford
A *Gift* so costly, for an *Aierie-word:*
And, I have prov'd, your *Begging-Qualitie*,
So forward, to oppresse my *Modestie;*
That, for my future ease, it seemeth fit,
To take some Order, for preventing it.
And, peradventure, other Authors may,
Find Cause to thanke me for't, another day.
These many years, it hath your *Custom* bin,
That, when in my possession, you have seene
A *Volume*, of mine owne, you did no more,
But, *Aske* and *Take;* As if you thought my store
Encreast, without my Cost; And, that, by *Giving*,
(Both *Paines* and Charges too) I got my living;
Or, that, I find the *Paper* and the *Printing*,
As easie to me, as the *Bookes* Inventing.

If, of my *Studies*, no esteeme you have,
You, then abuse the *Courtesies* you crave;
And, are *Unthankfull*. If you prize them ought,
Why should my *Labour*, not enough be thought,
Unlesse, I adde *Expences* to my paines?
The *Stationer*, affoords for little Gaines,
The *Bookes* you crave: And, He, as well as I
Might give away, what you repine to buy:
For, what hee *Gives*, doth onely *Mony* Cost,
In mine, both *Mony*, *Time*, and *Wit* is lost.
What I shall Give, and what I have bestow'd
On Friends, to whom, I *Love*, or *Service* ow'd,
I grudge not; And, I thinke it is from them,
Sufficient, that such *Gifts* they do esteeme:
Yea, and, it is a *Favour* too, when they
Will take these *Trifles*, my large *Dues* to pay;
(Or, Aske them at my hands, when I forget,
That, I am to their *Love*, so much in debt.)
But, this inferres not, that, I should bestow
The like on all men, who, my *Name* do know;
Or, have the Face to aske: For, then, I might,
Of *Wit* and *Mony*, soone be begger'd, quite.
So much, already, hath beene *Beg'd* away,
(For which, I neither had, nor looke for pay)
As being valu'd at the common Rate,
Had rais'd, *Five hundred Crownes*, in my Estate.
Which, (if I may confesse it) signifies,
That, I was farre more *Liberall*, than *Wise*.
But, for the time to come, resolv'd I am,
That, till without denyall (or just blame)
I may of those, who *Cloth* and *Clothes* do make,
(As oft as I shall need them) *Aske*, and *Take*;
You shall no more befoole me. Therfore, *Pray*
Be Answer'd; And, henceforward, keepe away.

SSAGE FROM GEORGE DYER'S "POETIC SYMPATHIES"

FROM *POEMS*, 1800

(*See Letter* 83, *page* 215)

Yet, Muse of Shakspeare,[1] whither wouldst thou fly,
With hurried step, and dove-like trembling eye?
Thou, as from heav'n, that couldst each grace dispense,
Fancy's rich stream, and all the stores of sense;
Give to each virtue face and form divine,
Make dulness feel, and vulgar souls refine,

[1] It is not meant to say, that even Shakspeare followed invariably a correct and stized taste, or that he never purchased public applause by offering incense at shrine of public taste. Voltaire, in his Essays on Dramatic Poetry, has carried matter too far; but in many respects his reflections are unquestionably just. delineating human characters and passions, and in the display of the sublimer ellencies of poetry, Shakspeare was unrivalled.

There he our fancy of itself bereaving,
Did make us marble with too much conceiving.
MILTON'S SONNET TO SHAKSPEARE.

Wake all the passions into restless life,
Now calm to softness, and now rouze to strife?

Sick of misjudging, that no sense can hit,
Scar'd by the jargon of unmeaning wit,
The senseless splendour of the tawdry stage,[1]
The loud long plaudits of a trifling age,
Where dost thou wander? Exil'd in disgrace,
Find'st thou in foreign realms some happier place?[2]
Or dost thou still though banish'd from the town,
In Britain love to linger, though unknown?
Light Hymen's torch through ev'ry blooming grove,[3]
And tinge each flow'ret with the blush of love?
Sing winter, summer-sweets, the vernal air,
Or the soft Sofa, to delight the fair?[4]
Laugh, e'en at kings, and mock each prudish rule,
The merry motley priest of ridicule?[5]
With modest pencil paint the vernal scene,
The rustic lovers, and the village green?
Bid Mem'ry, magic child, resume his toy,
And Hope's fond vot'ry seize the distant joy?[6]

[1] Pomp and splendour a poor substitute for genius.

[2] The dramatic muse seems of late years to have taken her residence in Germany. Schiller, Kotzebue, and Goethé, possess great merit both for passion and sentiment, and the English nation have done them justice. One or two principles which the French and English critics had too implicitly followed from Aristotle, are indeed not adopted, but have been, I hope, successfully, counteracted by these writers; yet are these dramatists characterised by a wildness bordering on extravagance, attendant on a state of half-civilization. Schiller and Kotzebue, amid some faults, possess great excellencies.

With respect to England, it has long been noticed by very intelligent observers, that the dramatic taste of the present age is vitiated. Pope, who directed very powerful satire against the stage in his time, makes Dulness say in general terms,

Contending theatres our empire raise,
Alike their censure, and alike their praise.

It would be the highest arrogance in me to make such an assertion, with my slender knowledge in these matters; ready too, as I am, to admire some excellent pieces that have fallen in my way; and to affirm, that there is by no means a deficiency of poetic talent in England.

Aristotle observes, that all the parts of the Epic poet are to be found in tragedy, and, consequently, that this species of writing is, of all others, most interesting to men of talents. (Περι ωοιητικης.) And baron Kotzebue thinks the theatre the best school of instruction, both in morals and taste, even for children; and that better effects are produced by a play, than by a sermon. See his life, written by himself, just translated by Anne Plumptre.

How much then is it to be wished, that so admirable a mean of amusement and instruction might be advanced to its true point of excellence! But the principles laid down by Bishop HURD, though calculated to advance the love of splendour, will not, I suspect, advance the TRUE PROVINCE OF THE DRAMA.

[3] Loves of the Plants, by Dr. Darwin.

[4] The Task, by Cowper: written at the request of a lady. The introductory poem is entitled, The Sofa.

[5] Dr. Walcot [Wolcot: Peter Pindar], whose poetry is of a farcical and humorous character.

[6] The Pleasures of Memory, by Rogers; and the Pleasures of Hope, by Campbell.

Or dost thou soar, in youthful ardour strong,
And bid some female hero live in song? [1]
Teach fancy how through nature's walks to stray,
And wake, to simpler theme, the lyric lay? [2]
Or steal from beauty's lip th' ambrosial kiss,
Paint the domestic grief, or social bliss? [3]
With patient step now tread o'er rock and hill,
Gaze on rough ocean, track the babbling rill,[4]
Then rapt in thought, with strong poetic eye,
Read the great movement of the mighty sky?

Or wilt thou spread the light of Leo's age,
And smooth, as woman's guide, Tansillo's page? [5]
Till pleas'd, you make in fair translated song,
Odin descend, and rouse the fairy throng? [6]
Recall, employment sweet, thy youthful day,
Then wake, at Mithra's call, the mystic lay? [7]
Unfold the Paradise of ancient lore, [8]
Or mark the shipwreck from the sounding shore?
Now love to linger in the daisied vale,
Then rise sublime in legendary tale? [9]
Or, faithful still to nature's sober joy,
Smile on the labours of some Farmer's Boy? [10]
Or e'en regardless of the poet's praise,
Deck the fair magazine with blooming lays? [11]
Oh! sweetest muse, oh, haste thy wish'd return,
See genius droop, and bright-ey'd fancy mourn,
Recall to nature's charms an English stage,
The guard and glory of a nobler age.

[1] Joan of Arc, by Southey;—a volume of poems with an introductory sonnet to Mary Wolstonecraft, and a poem, on the praise of woman, breathes the same spirit.

[2] Alludes to the character of a volume of poems, entitled Lyrical Ballads. Under this head also should be mentioned Smythe's English Lyrics.

[3] Characteristic of a volume of poems, the joint production of Coleridge, Lloyd, and Lamb.

[4] Descriptive Poems, such as Leusden hill, by Thomas Crowe; and the Malvern hills, by Joseph Cottle.

[5] Roscoe's Reign of Leo de Medici is interspersed with poetry. Roscoe has also translated, THE NURSE, a poem, from the Italian of Luigi Tansillo.

[6] Icelandic poetry, or the Edda of Sæmund, translated by Amos Cottle; and the Oberon of Wieland, by Sotheby.

[7] Thomas Maurice, the author of the Indian Antiquities, is republishing his poems; the Song to Mithra is in the third volume of Indian Antiquities.

[8] The Paradise of Taste, and Pictures of Poetry, by Alexander Thomson.

[9] There is a tale of this character by Dr. Aikin, and the Hermit of Warkworth, by Bishop Percy. It will please the friends of taste to hear, that Cartwright's Armine and Elvira, which has been long out of print, is now republishing.

[10] The Farmer's Boy, a poem just published, on THE SEASONS, by Robert Bloomfield.

[11] Many of the anonymous poetical pieces thrown into magazines, possess poetical merit. Those of a young lady in the Monthly Magazine, will, I hope, in time be more generally known. Those of Rushton, of Liverpool, will also, I hope, be published by some judicious friend:—this worthy man is a bookseller, who has been afflicted with blindness from his youth.

HAYDON'S PARTY

FROM THE *LIFE OF BENJAMIN ROBERT HAYDON*, BY TOM TAYLOR

(*See Letter* 228, *page* 509)

On December 28th the immortal dinner came off in my painting-room, with Jerusalem towering up behind us as a background. Wordsworth was in fine cue, and we had a glorious set-to,—on Homer, Shakespeare, Milton and Virgil. Lamb got exceedingly merry and exquisitely witty; and his fun in the midst of Wordsworth's solemn intonations of oratory was like the sarcasm and wit of the fool in the intervals of Lear's passion. He made a speech and voted me absent, and made them drink my health. "Now," said Lamb, "you old lake poet, you rascally poet, why do you call Voltaire dull?" We all defended Wordsworth, and affirmed there was a state of mind when Voltaire would be dull. "Well," said Lamb, "here's Voltaire—the Messiah of the French nation, and a very proper one too."

He then, in a strain of humour beyond description, abused me for putting Newton's head into my picture,—"a fellow," said he, "who believed nothing unless it was as clear as the three sides of a triangle." And then he and Keats agreed he had destroyed all the poetry of the rainbow by reducing it to the prismatic colours. It was impossible to resist him, and we all drank "Newton's health, and confusion to mathematics." It was delightful to see the good-humour of Wordsworth in giving in to all our frolics without affectation and laughing as heartily as the best of us.

By this time other friends joined, amongst them poor Ritchie who was going to penetrate by Fezzan to Timbuctoo. I introduced him to all as "a gentleman going to Africa." Lamb seemed to take no notice; but all of a sudden he roared out, "Which is the gentleman we are going to lose?" We then drank the victim's health, in which Ritchie joined.

In the morning of this delightful day, a gentleman, a perfect stranger, had called on me. He said he knew my friends, had an enthusiasm for Wordsworth and begged I would procure him the happiness of an introduction. He told me he was a comptroller of stamps, and often had correspondence with the poet. I thought it a liberty; but still, as he seemed a gentleman, I told him he might come.

When we retired to tea we found the comptroller. In introducing him to Wordsworth I forgot to say who he was. After a little time the comptroller looked down, looked up and said to Wordsworth, "Don't you think, sir, Milton was a great genius?" Keats looked at me, Wordsworth looked at the comptroller. Lamb who was dozing by the fire turned round and said, "Pray, sir, did you say Milton was a great genius?" "No, sir; I asked Mr. Wordsworth if he were not."

"Oh," said Lamb, "then you are a silly fellow." "Charles! my dear Charles!" said Wordsworth; but Lamb, perfectly innocent of the confusion he had created, was off again by the fire.

After an awful pause the comptroller said, "Don't you think Newton a great genius?" I could not stand it any longer. Keats put his head into my books. Ritchie squeezed in a laugh. Wordsworth seemed asking himself, "Who is this?" Lamb got up, and taking a candle, said, "Sir, will you allow me to look at your phrenological development?" He then turned his back on the poor man, and at every question of the comptroller he chaunted—

> "Diddle diddle dumpling, my son John
> Went to bed with his breeches on."

The man in office, finding Wordsworth did not know who he was, said in a spasmodic and half-chuckling anticipation of assured victory, "I have had the honour of some correspondence with you, Mr. Wordsworth." "With me, sir?" said Wordsworth, "not that I remember." "Don't you, sir? I am a comptroller of stamps." There was a dead silence;—the comptroller evidently thinking that was enough. While we were waiting for Wordsworth's reply, Lamb sung out

> "Hey diddle diddle,
> The cat and the fiddle."

"My dear Charles!" said Wordsworth,—

> "Diddle diddle dumpling, my son John,"

chaunted Lamb, and then rising, exclaimed, "Do let me have another look at that gentleman's organs." Keats and I hurried Lamb into the painting-room, shut the door and gave way to inextinguishable laughter. Monkhouse followed and tried to get Lamb away. We went back, but the comptroller was irreconcilable. We soothed and smiled and asked him to supper. He stayed though his dignity was sorely affected. However, being a good-natured man, we parted all in good-humour, and no ill effects followed.

All the while, until Monkhouse succeeded, we could hear Lamb struggling in the painting-room and calling at intervals, "Who is that fellow? Allow me to see his organs once more."

It was indeed an immortal evening. Wordsworth's fine intonation as he quoted Milton and Virgil, Keats' eager inspired look, Lamb's quaint sparkle of lambent humour, so speeded the stream of conversation, that in my life I never passed a more delightful time. All our fun was within bounds. Not a word passed that an apostle might not have listened to. It was a night worthy of the Elizabethan age, and my solemn Jerusalem flashing up by the flame of the fire, with Christ hanging over us like a vision, all made up a picture which will long glow upon—

> "that inward eye
> Which is the bliss of solitude."

Keats made Ritchie promise he would carry his Endymion to the great desert of Sahara and fling it in the midst.

Poor Ritchie went to Africa, and died, as Lamb foresaw, in 1819. Keats died in 1821, at Rome. C. Lamb is gone, joking to the last. Monkhouse is dead, and Wordsworth and I are the only two now living (1841) of that glorious party.

SOUTHEY'S "TO THE CHAPEL BELL"

FROM *POEMS*, 1797

(*See Letter* 361, *page* 691)

" Lo I, the man who erst the Muse did ask
  Her deepest notes to swell the Patriot's meeds,
Am now enforcst, a far unfitter task,
  For cap and gown to leave my minstrel weeds;"
For yon dull noise that tinkles on the air
Bids me lay by the lyre and go to morning prayer.

Oh how I hate the sound! it is the Knell,
  That still a requiem tolls to Comfort's hour;
And loth am I, at Superstition's bell,
  To quit or Morpheus or the Muses bower:
Better to lie and dose, than gape amain,
Hearing still mumbled o'er, the same eternal strain.

Thou tedious herald of more tedious prayers,
  Say hast thou ever summoned from his rest,
One being awakening to religious awe?
  Or rous'd one pious transport in the breast?
Or rather, do not all reluctant creep
To linger out the hour, in listlessness or sleep?

I love the bell, that calls the poor to pray,
  Chiming from village church its chearful sound
When the sun smiles on Labour's holy day,
  And all the rustic train are gathered round,
Each deftly dizen'd in his Sunday's best,
And pleas'd to hail the day of piety and rest.

Or when, dim-shadowing o'er the face of day,
  The mantling mists of even-tide rise slow,
As thro' the forest gloom I wend my way,
  The minster curfew's sullen roar I know;
I pause and love its solemn toll to hear,
As made by distance soft, it dies upon the ear.

Nor not to me the unfrequent midnight knell
  Tolls sternly harmonising; on mine ear
As the deep death-fraught sounds long lingering dwell
  Sick to the heart of Love and Hope and Fear
Soul-jaundiced, I do loathe Life's upland steep
And with strange envy muse the dead man's dreamless sleep.

But thou, memorial of monastic gall!
  What Fancy sad or lightsome hast thou given?
Thy vision-scaring sounds alone recall
  The prayer that trembles on a yawn to heaven;
And this Dean's gape, and that Dean's nosal tone,
And Roman rites retain'd, tho' Roman faith be flown.

BERNARD BARTON'S "THE SPIRITUAL LAW"

FROM *DEVOTIONAL VERSES*, 1826

(*See Letter* 370, *page* 698)

"But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou ıyest do it."—Deut. xxx. 14.

Say not The law divine
Is hidden from thee, or far remov'd:
That law within would shine,
If there its glorious light were sought and lov'd.

Soar not on high,
Nor ask who thence shall bring it down to earth;
That vaulted sky
Hath no such star, didst thou but know its worth.

Nor launch thy bark
In search thereof upon a shoreless sea,
Which has no ark,
No dove to bring this olive-branch to thee.

Then do not roam
In search of that which wandering cannot win;
At home! At home!
That word is plac'd, thy mouth, thy heart within.

Oh! seek it there,
Turn to its teachings with devoted will;
Watch unto prayer,
And in the power of faith this law fulfil.

BARTON'S "THE TRANSLATION OF ENOCH"

FROM *NEW YEAR'S EVE*, 1828

(*See Letter* 445, *page* 788)

"And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."
Genesis.

Though proudly through the vaulted sky
Was borne Elisha's sire,
And dazzling unto mortal eye
His car and steeds of fire:

To me as glorious seems the change
Accorded to thy worth;
As instantaneous and as strange
Thy exit from this earth.

Something which wakes a deeper thrill,
These few brief words unfold,
Than all description's proudest skill
Could of that hour have told.

Fancy's keen eye may trace the course
  Elijah held on high:
The car of flame, each fiery horse,
  Her visions may supply;—

But THY transition mocks each dream
  Framed by her wildest power,
Nor can her mastery supreme
  Conceive thy parting hour.

Were angels, with expanded wings,
  As guides and guardians given?
Or did sweet sounds from seraphs' strings
  Waft thee from earth to heaven?

'Twere vain to ask: we know but this—
  Thy path from grief and time
Unto eternity and bliss,
  Mysterious and sublime!

With God thou walkedst: and wast not!
  And thought and fancy fail
Further than this to paint thy lot,
  Or tell thy wondrous tale.

TALFOURD'S "VERSES IN MEMORY OF A CHILD NAMED AFTER CHARLES LAMB"

FROM THE *FINAL MEMORIALS OF CHARLES LAMB*

(*See Letter* 447, *page* 792)

Our gentle Charles has pass'd away
  From Earth's short bondage free,
And left to us its leaden day
  And mist-enshrouded sea.

Here, by the restless ocean's side,
  Sweet hours of hope have flown,
When first the triumph of its tide
  Seem'd omen of our own.

That eager joy the sea-breeze gave,
  When first it raised his hair,
Sunk with each day's retiring wave,
  Beyond the reach of prayer.

The sun-blink that through drizzling mist,
  To flickering hope akin,
Lone waves with feeble fondness kiss'd,
  No smile as faint can win;

Yet not in vain, with radiance weak,
  The heavenly stranger gleams—
Not of the world it lights to speak,
  But that from whence it streams.

That world our patient sufferer sought,
  Serene with pitying eyes,
As if his mounting Spirit caught
  The wisdom of the skies.

With boundless love it look'd abroad
  For one bright moment given;
Shone with a loveliness that aw'd,
  And quiver'd into Heaven.

A year made slow by care and toil
  Has paced its weary round,
Since Death enrich'd with kindred spoil
  The snow-clad, frost-ribb'd ground.

Then LAMB, with whose endearing name
  Our boy we proudly graced,
Shrank from the warmth of sweeter fame
  Than mightier Bards embraced.

Still 'twas a mournful joy to think
  Our darling might supply
For years to us, a living link,
  To name that cannot die.

And though such fancy gleam no more
  On earthly sorrow's night,
Truth's nobler torch unveils the shore
  Which lends to both its light.

The nurseling there that hand may take,
  None ever grasp'd in vain,
And smiles of well-known sweetness wake,
  Without their tinge of pain.

Though, 'twixt the Child and child-like Bard,
  Late seemed distinction wide,
They now may trace in Heaven's regard,
  How near they were allied.

Within the infant's ample brow
  Blythe fancies lay unfurl'd,
Which, all uncrush'd, may open now,
  To charm a sinless world.

Though the soft spirit of those eyes
  Might ne'er with LAMB's compete—
Ne'er sparkle with a wit as wise,
  Or melt in tears, as sweet;

That calm and unforgotten look
  A kindred love reveals,
With his who never friend forsook,
  Or hurt a thing that feels.

In thought profound, in wildest glee,
  In sorrows dark and strange,
The soul of Lamb's bright infancy
  Endured no spot or change.

From traits of each our love receives
  For comfort, nobler scope;
While light, which child-like genius leaves,
  Confirms the infant's hope;

And in that hope with sweetness fraught
Be aching hearts beguiled,
To blend in one delightful thought
The POET and the CHILD!

EDWARD FITZGERALD'S "THE MEADOWS IN SPRING"

FROM HONE'S *YEAR BOOK*

(*See Letter* 512, *page* 878)

'Tis a sad sighe
To see the year dying;
When autumn's last wind
Sets the yellow wood sighing;
Sighing, oh sighing!

When such a time cometh,
I do retire
Into an old room,
Beside a bright fire;
Oh! pile a bright fire!

And there I sit
Reading old things
Of knights and ladies,
While the wind sings:
Oh! drearily sings!

I never look out,
Nor attend to the blast;
For, all to be seen,
Is the leaves falling fast:
Falling, falling!

But, close at the hearth,
Like a cricket, sit I;
Reading of summer
And chivalry:
Gallant chivalry!

Then, with an old friend,
I talk of our youth;
How 'twas gladsome, but often
Foolish, forsooth,
But gladsome, gladsome.

Or, to get merry,
We sing an old rhyme
That made the wood ring again
In summer time:
Sweet summer time!

Then take we to smoking,
Silent and snug:
Nought passes between us,
Save a brown jug;
Sometimes! sometimes!

And sometimes a tear
Will rise in each eye,
Seeing the two old friends,
So merrily;
So merrily!

And ere to bed
Go we, go we,
Down by the ashes
We kneel on the knee;
Praying, praying!

Thus then live I,
Till, breaking the gloom
Of winter, the bold sun
Is with me in the room!
Shining, shining!

Then the clouds part,
Swallows soaring between:
The spring is awake,
And the meadows are green,—

I jump up like mad;
Break the old pipe in twain;
And away to the meadows,
The meadows again!

EPSILON.

JAMES MONTGOMERY'S "THE COMMON LOT"

(*See Letter* 512, *page* 878)

A Birth-day Meditation, during a solitary winter walk of seven miles, between village in Derbyshire and Sheffield, when the ground was covered with snow, e sky serene, and the morning air intensely pure.

Once in the flight of ages past,
There lived a man:—and WHO was HE?
—Mortal! howe'er thy lot be cast,
That man resembled Thee.

Unknown the region of his birth,
The land in which he died unknown:
His name has perish'd from the earth;
This truth survives alone:—

That joy and grief, and hope and fear,
Alternate triumph'd in his breast;
His bliss and woe,—a smile, a tear!—
Oblivion hides the rest.

The bounding pulse, the languid limb,
The changing spirits' rise and fall;
We know that these were felt by him,
For these are felt by all.

He suffer'd,—but his pangs are o'er;
Enjoy'd,—but his delights are fled;
Had friends,—his friends are now no more;
And foes,—his foes are dead.

He loved,—but whom he loved, the grave
Hath lost in its unconscious womb:
O, she was fair!—but nought could save
Her beauty from the tomb.

He saw whatever thou hast seen;
Encounter'd all that troubles thee:
He was—whatever thou hast been;
He is—what thou shalt be.

The rolling seasons, day and night,
Sun, moon, and stars, the earth and main,
Erewhile his portion, life and light,
To him exist in vain.

The clouds and sunbeams, o'er his eye
That once their shades and glory threw,
Have left in yonder silent sky
No vestige where they flew.

The annals of the human race,
Their ruins, since the world began,
Of HIM afford no other trace
Than this,—THERE LIVED A MAN!

November 4, 1805.

BARRY CORNWALL'S "EPISTLE TO CHARLES LAMB; ON HIS EMANCIPATION FROM CLERKSHIP"

(WRITTEN OVER A FLASK OF SHERRIS)

FROM *ENGLISH SONGS*

(*See Letter* 527, *page* 893)

Dear Lamb! I drink to thee,—to *thee*
Married to sweet Liberty!

What, old friend, and art thou freed
From the bondage of the pen?
Free from care and toil indeed?
Free to wander amongst men
When and howsoe'er thou wilt?
All thy drops of labour spilt,
On those huge and figured pages,
Which will sleep unclasp'd for ages,
Little knowing who did wield
The quill that traversed their white field?

Come,—another mighty health!
Thou hast earn'd thy sum of wealth,—
Countless ease,—immortal leisure,—
Days and nights of boundless pleasure,
Checquer'd by no dreams of pain,
Such as hangs on clerk-like brain
Like a night-mare, and doth press
The happy soul from happiness.

Oh! happy thou,—whose all of time
(Day and eve, and morning prime)
Is fill'd with talk on pleasant themes,—
Or visions quaint, which come in dreams
Such as panther'd Bacchus rules,
When his rod is on "the schools,"
Mixing wisdom with their wine;—
Or, perhaps, thy wit so fine
Strayeth in some elder book,
Whereon our modern Solons look
With severe ungifted eyes,
Wondering what thou seest to prize.
Happy thou, whose skill can take
Pleasure at each turn, and slake
Thy thirst by every fountain's brink,
Where less wise men would pause to shrink:
Sometimes, 'mid stately avenues
With Cowley thou, or Marvel's muse,
Dost walk; or Gray, by Eton's towers;
Or Pope, in Hampton's chesnut bowers;
Or Walton, by his loved Lea stream:
Or dost thou with our Milton dream,
Of Eden and the Apocalypse,
And hear the words from his great lips?

Speak,—in what grove or hazel shade,
For "musing meditation made,"
Dost wander?—or on Penshurst Lawn,
Where Sidney's fame had time to dawn
And die, ere yet the hate of Men
Could envy at his perfect pen?
Or, dost thou, in some London street,
(With voices fill'd and thronging feet,)
Loiter, with mien 'twixt grave and gay?—
Or take along some pathway sweet,
Thy calm suburban way?

Happy beyond that man of Ross,
Whom mere content could ne'er engross,
Art thou,—with hope, health, "learned leisure;"
Friends, books, thy thoughts, an endless pleasure!
—Yet—yet,—(for when was pleasure made
Sunshine all without a shade?)
Thou, perhaps, as now thou rovest
Through the busy scenes thou lovest,
With an Idler's careless look,
Turning some moth-pierced book,
Feel'st a sharp and sudden woe
For visions vanished long ago!
And then thou think'st how time has fled
Over thy unsilvered head,
Snatching many a fellow mind
Away, and leaving—what?—behind!
Nought, alas! save joy and pain
Mingled ever, like a strain
Of music where the discords vie
With the truer harmony.
So, perhaps, with thee the vein
Is sullied ever,—so the chain

Of habits and affections old,
Like a weight of solid gold,
Presseth on thy gentle breast,
Till sorrow rob thee of thy rest.

Ay: so't must be!—Ev'n I, (whose lot
The fairy Love so long forgot,)
Seated beside this Sherris wine,
And near to books and shapes divine,
Which poets, and the painters past
Have wrought in lines that aye shall last,—
Ev'n I, with Shakspeare's self beside me,
And one whose tender talk can guide me
Through fears, and pains, and troublous themes,
Whose smile doth fall upon my dreams
Like sunshine on a stormy sea,—
Want *something*—when I think of thee!

APPENDIX II

CONSISTING OF NEW MATTER RELATING TO THE CORRESPONDENCE WHICH HAS COME TO LIGHT SINCE THIS EDITION WENT TO PRESS; WITH A FEW ADDITIONAL LETTERS

Letter 45, *page* 145. *To Southey*

After "Burns hath done his part," on page 147, line 2, comes:—

I the other day threw off an extempore epitaph on Ensign Peacock of the 3rd Regt. of the Royal East India Volunteers, who like other boys in this scarlet tainted age was ambitious of playing at soldiers, but dying in the first flash of his valour was at the particular instance of his relations buried with military honours! like any veteran scarr'd or chopt from Blenheim or Ramilies. (He was buried in sash and gorget.)

MARMOR LOQUITUR

He lies a Volunteer so fine,
Who died of a decline,
As you or I, may do one day;
Reader, think of this, I pray;
And I humbly hope you'll drop a tear
For my poor Royal Volunteer.
He was as brave as brave could be,
Nobody was so brave as he;
He would have died in Honor's bed,
Only he died at home instead.
Well may the Royal Regiment swear,
They never had such a Volunteer.
But whatsoever they may say,
Death is a man that will have his way:
Tho' he was but an ensign in this world of pain;
In the next we hope he'll be a captain.
And without meaning to make any reflection on his mentals,
He begg'd to be buried in regimentals.

Sed hæ sunt lamentabilis nugæ—But 'tis as good as some epitaphs you and I have read together in Christ-Church-yard.

Letter 48, *page* 152. *To Manning*

After "Cambridge," page 153, should come:—

I dined with him in town and breakfasted with him and Priscilla, who you may tell Charles has promised to come and see me when she returns [to] Clapham. I will write to Charles on Monday.

Letter 50, *page* 155

An unpublished letter from Lamb to Manning tells the story of the Charles Lloyd and Mary Hayes imbroglio. Lloyd had written to Miss Hayes a very odd letter concerning her Godwinite creed, in which he refers to her belief that she was in love with him and repeats old stories that she had been in love both with Godwin and Frend. Here is one sentence: "In the confounding medley of ordinary conversation, I have interwoven my abhorrence of your principles with a glanced contempt for your personal character." This letter Lloyd had given to his sister Olivia to copy—"An ignorant Quaker girl," says Lamb, "I mean ignorant in the best sense, who ought not to know, that such a thing was possible or in rerum naturæ that a woman should court a man." Later: "As long as Lloyd or I have known Col. [Coleridge] so long have we known him in the daily and hourly habit of quizzing the world by lyes most unaccountable and most disinterested fictions." And here is one more passage: "To sum up my inferences from the above facts, I am determined to live a merry Life in the midst of Sinners. I try to consider all men as such, and to pitch my expectations from human nature as low as possible. In this view, all unexpected Virtues are Godsends and beautiful exceptions."

Letter 53, *page* 161

Lamb's next letter to Manning, which has not been printed and is not available for this edition, contained the promised copy of the "Conceipt of Diabolical Possession." It also contained a copy of Thekla's song in "Wallenstein," in Lamb's translation (see Vol. V., page 27), which he says is better than the original "a huge deal." Finally Lamb copies the old ballad "Edward, Edward" and calls it "the very first dramatic poem in the English language."

Letter 89, *page* 225

Following this letter should come one from Lamb to John Rickman, dated September 16, 1801 (the first of a valuable series printed in Canon Ainger's latest edition), saying that he and his sister are at Margate. He has been trying to write for the *Morning Chronicle* but with little success. Is now meditating a book: "Why should every creature make books but I?" After a passage concerning George Burnett, Lamb describes Godwin and his courtship of his second wife—"a very disgusting woman." "You never saw such a philosophic coxcomb, nor any one play the Romeo so unnaturally."

Letter 90, *page* 228

Following this letter should come a letter from Lamb to John Rickman, describing the state of their two George friends: George the First (George Dyer) and George the Second (George Burnett). Burnett, he says, as ill becomes adversity as Dyer would prosperity. He tells also

of another poor acquaintance of Rickman's—one Simonds with a slit-lip, who has been to Lamb to borrow money. "Saving his dirty shirt and his physiognomy and his 'bacco box together with a certain kiddy air in his walk, a man w^d have gone near to have mistaken him for a gentleman. He has a sort of ambition to be so misunderstood."

Letter 91, *page* 230

Lamb's next letter to Rickman, dated November 24, 1801, contains better news of Dyer and returns to the subject of *John Woodvil*. "Dyer regularly dines with me when he does not go a visiting, and brings his shilling." Also, says Lamb, he talks of marrying. "He has not forgiven me for betraying to you his purpose of writing his own Life. He says, that if it once spreads, so many people will expect and wish to have a place in it, that he is sure he shall disoblige all his friends."

Another, undated, letter to Rickman should probably come hereabouts, saying that Dyer has been lent a house at Enfield full of books, where he is at work on his Poems.

Here perhaps should come a further undated letter to Rickman in which Lamb says that the receipt of £50 for an old debt has made it possible to print *John Woodvil*. Dyer, he says, is "the most unmanageable of God's creatures." Burnett is in a very bad way again. Fenwick's paper *The Plough* has become a weekly. Godwin is not yet married. Fell, Godwin's shadow, is writing a comedy: "An Owl making a Pun would be no bad emblem of the unnatural attempt." In a postscript Lamb says that he has since read the play and it is not bad: "Who knows, but Owls do make Puns when they hoot by moonshine." The best news is that Lamb is to be a theatrical critic for the *Morning Post*.

Here should come a letter to Rickman dated January 9, 1802, the principal news in which is that George Dyer is consorting with the Earl of Buchan, the "eccentric biographer of Fletcher of Saltoun," and has brought him to see Lamb. "I wasn't at home, but Mary was washing —a pretty pickle to receive an Earl in! Lord have mercy upon us! a Lord in my garret! My utmost ambition was some time or other to receive a Secretary. Well, I am to breakfast with this mad Lord on Sunday." Lamb refers to his article in the *Post* on Cooke's "Richard III." (see Vol. I. of this edition, pages 36 and 398).

Here should come a letter to Rickman dated January 14, 1802, in which Lamb confesses to the authorship of "Dick Strype" in the *Morning Post* of January 6 (see Appendix III., page 989); also of a whimsical account of the Lord Mayor's State Bed (see Appendix III., page 980); and of some of the Twelfth Night Epigrams (see Vol. V., page 102). He includes two epigrams which the editor rejected; one,

on Solomon the Quack, is printed in Vol. V. of this edition, page 106, from *The Champion* in 1820; the other, on Count Rumford, will be found in Appendix III., page 992.

Here should come a note to Rickman dated January 18, 1802, relating to a joint subscription with Rickman's father for certain newspapers.

Here should come a letter to Rickman dated February 1, 1802, giving the first draft of the epitaph for Mary Druitt (see Vol. V., pages 80 and 322). He also says that George Burnett, who had just been appointed tutor to the sons of Lord ("Citizen") Stanhope, is perplexed because his pupils have run away.

Here should come a note to Rickman, dated February 4, 1802, accompanying three copies of *John Woodvil* and saying that an annuity is to be bought for George Dyer by certain friends.

Here should come a letter to Rickman, dated February 14, 1802, which contains the news that Lamb has given up the *Post*. He feels much relieved in consequence, in spite of the loss of money. George Dyer's dinner money is now paid from his friends' fund, and Burnett is happy in doing nothing for Lord Stanhope's salary. Mary Lamb does not want Rickman to know that "Helen," in the *John Woodvil* volume, is of her writing.

Letter 94, *page* 240. *To Manning*

After "extinct a moon ago" comes:—

Lloyd has written to me and names you. I think a letter from Maison Magnan (is that a person or a thing?) would gratify him. G. Dyer is in love with an Ideot who loves a Doctor, who is incapable of loving anything but himself. A puzzling circle of perverse Providences! A maze as un-get-out-again-able as the House which Jack built.

Letter 96, *page* 243. *To Manning*

After the statement that Wordsworth has "gone into Yorkshire to be married" comes:—

to a girl of small fortune, but he is in expectation of augmenting his own in consequence of the death of Lord Lonsdale, who kept him out of his own in conformity with a plan my lord had taken up in early life of making everybody unhappy.

Letter 99, *page* 252. *To Coleridge*

Completion of letter of October 23, 1802.

The letter begins:—

Your kind offer I will not a second time refuse. You shall send me a packet and I will do them into English with great care. Is not there

one about Wm. Tell, and would not that in the present state of discussions be likely to *tell?* The Engravers I meant are to be found at the end of Harrington's Translation of Orlando Furioso: if you could get the book, they would some of them answer your purpose to modernize. If you can't, I fancy I can. Baxter's Holy Commonwealth I have luckily met with, and when I have sent it, you shall if you please consider yourself indebted to me 3s. 6d. the cost of it: especially as I purchased it after your solemn injunctions. The plain case with regard to my presents (which you seem so to shrink from) is that I have not at all affected the character of a DONOR, or thought of violating your sacred Law of Give and Take: but I have been *taking* and partaking the good things of your House (when I know you were not over-abounding) and I now *give* unto you of mine; and by the grace of God I happen to be myself a little super-abundant at present. I expect I shall be able to send you my final parcel in about a week: by that time I shall have gone thro' all Milton's Latin Works. There will come with it the Holy Commonwealth, and the identical North American Bible which you helped to dogs ear at Xt's.—I call'd at Howell's for your little Milton, and also to fetch away the White Cross Street Library Books, which I have not forgot: but your books were not in a state to be got at then, and Mrs. H. is to let me know when she packs up. They will be sent by sea; and my little præcursor will come to you by the Whitehaven waggon accompanied with pens, penknife &c.—Mrs. Howell was as usual very civil; and asked with great earnestness, if it were likely you would come to Town in the winter. She has a friendly eye upon you.

Letter 109, *page* 277

Following this should come a letter from Lamb to Rickman, dated July 27, 1803. It is part of one from Captain Burney describing the adventures of the Burneys and Lambs at Cowes. Lamb, says the Captain, on their way to Newport "very ingeniously and unconsciously cast loose the fastenings of the mast, so that mast, sprit, sails, and all the rest tumbled overboard with a crash." Lamb on his part is amusing about the Captain and Martin Burney, and says he longs for Holborn scenery again.

Letter 150, *page* 348. *To Manning*

On one of the margins is added:—

I have made strict inquiries through my friend Thompson as to your affairs with the Compy. If there had been a committee yesterday an order would have been sent to the captain to draw on them for your passage money, but there was no Committee. But in the secretary's orders to receive you on board, it was specified that the Company would defray your passage, all the orders about you to the super-cargoes are certainly in your ship. Here I will manage anything you may want done. What can I add but take care of yourself. We drink tea with the Holcrofts tomorrow.

Letter 157, *page* 364. *To Manning*

After "I have seen him here and at Holcroft's" (page 365) comes:—

I have likewise seen his wife, this elegant little French woman whose hair reaches to her heels—by the same token that Tom (Tommy H.) took the comb out of her head, not expecting the issue, and it fell down to the ground to his utter consternation, two ells long.

Mrs. Holcroft was Louise Mercier. Afterwards she married James Kenney. Tommy was Holcroft's son.

After "Mr. De Camp" (page 365), "A vulgar brother of Miss De Camp."

Of Bannister (page 365), "He is a fellow with the make of a jockey, and the air of a lamplighter." Lamb, however, praised Bannister many years later in the essay on the Old Actors.

After the reference to Ball, on page 368, "Amongst many queer cattle I have and do meet with at the India Ho. I always liked his behaviour. Tell him his friend Evans &c. are well. Woodruff not dead yet."

Letter 167, *page* 381. *To Manning*

After "doctor's mouth" (page 383) should come:—

Do you know Watford in Hertfordshire? it is a pretty village. Louisa goes to school there. They say the governess is a very intelligent managing person, takes care of the morals of the pupils, teaches them something beyond exteriors. Poor Mrs. Beaumont! Rickman's aunt, she might have been a governess (as both her nieces are) if she had any ability or any education, but I never thought she was good for anything; she is dead and so is her nephew. He was shot in half at Monte Video, that is, not exactly in half, but as you have seen a 3 quarter picture. Stoddart is in England.

Letter 170, *page* 389

After this letter should come the following (Letter 170A), which I copy from *The Mirror*, 1841:—

CHARLES LAMB TO GEORGE DYER

From my Desk in Leadenhall Street,
Decr 5, 1808.

DEAR DYER

Coleridge is not so bad as your fears have represented him; it is true that he is Bury'd, altho' he is not dead; to understand this quibble you must know that he is at Bury St. Edmunds, relaxing, after the fatigues of lecturing and Londonizing. The little Rickmaness, whom you enquire after so kindly, thrives and grows apace; she is already a prattler, and 'tis thought that on some future day she may be a speaker. [This was Mrs. Lefroy.] We hold our weekly meetings still at No 16,

where altho' we are not so high as the top of Malvern, we are involved in almost as much mist. Miss B[etham]'s merit "in every point of view," I am not disposed to question, altho' I have not been indulged with any view of that lady, back, side, or front—*fie!* Dyer, to praise a female in such common market phrases—you who are held so courtly and so attentive. My book is not yet out, that is not my "Extracts," my "Ulysses" is, and waits your acceptance. When you shall come to town, I hope to present you both together—never think of buying the "Extracts"—half guinea books were never calculated for my friends. Those poets have started up since your departure; William Hazlitt, your friend and mine, is putting to press a collection of verses, chiefly amatory, some of them pretty enough. How these painters encroach on our province! There's Hoppner, Shee, Westall, and I don't know who besides, and Tresham. It seems on confession, that they are not at the top of their own art, when they seek to eke out their fame with the assistance of another's; no large tea-dealer sells cheese; no great silversmith sells razorstrops; it is only your petty dealers who mix commodities. If Nero had been a great Emperor, he would never have played the Violoncello! Who ever caught you, Dyer, designing a landscape, or taking a likeness? I have no more to add, who am the friend of virtue, poetry, painting, therefore in an especial manner,

Unalterably Thine

C. Lamb.

Letter 173, *page* 395. *To Manning.*

After "He [Holcroft] died on Thursday last" comes:—

and is not yet buried. He has been opened by Carlisle and his heart was found completely ossified. He has had a long and severe illness. He seemed very willing to live, and to the last acted on his favorite principle of the power of the will to overcome disease. I believe his strong faith in that power kept him alive long after another person would have given him up, and the physicians all concurred in positively saying he would not live a week, many weeks before he died. The family are as well as can be expected. I told you something about Mrs. Holcroft's plans. Since her death there has been a meeting of his friends and a subscription has been mentioned. I have no doubt that she will be set agoing, and that she will be fully competent to the scheme which she proposes. Fanny bears it much better than I could have supposed.

Letter 179, *page* 409. *To Manning*

After "for I never think about them" comes:—

Miss Knap is turned midwife. Never having had a child herself, she can't draw any wrong analogies from her own case. Dr. Stoddart has had Twins. There was five shillings to pay the Nurse. Mrs. Godwin was impannelled on a jury of Matrons last Sessions. She saved a

criminal's life by giving it as her opinion that —— ——. The Judge listened to her with the greatest deference.

Letter 197, *page* 438. *To Coleridge*

Completion of letter of August 13, 1814.

After "stagnate" (page 439) comes :—

One piece of news I know will give you pleasure—Rickman is made a Clerk to the House of Commons, £2000 a year with greater expectat^ns—but that is not the news—but it is that poor card-playing Phillips, that has felt himself for so many years the outcast of Fortune, which feeling pervaded his very intellect, till it made the destiny it feared, withering his hopes in the great and little games of life—by favor of the single star that ever shone upon him since his birth, has strangely stept into Rickman's Secretaryship—sword, bag, House and all—from a hopeless £100 a year eaten up beforehand with desperate debts, to a clear £400 or £500—it almost reconciles me to the belief of a moral government of the world—the man stares and gapes and seems to be always wondering at what has befaln him—he tries to be eager at Cribbage, but alas! the source of that Interest is dried up for ever, he no longer plays for his next day's meal, or to determine whether he shall have a half dinner or a whole dinner, whether he shall buy a pair of black silk stockings, or wax his old ones a week or two longer, the poor man's relish of a Trump, the Four Honors, is gone —and I do not know whether if we could get at the bottom of things whether poor star-doomed Phillips with his hair staring with despair was not a happier being than the sleek well combed oily-pated Secretary that has succeeded. The gift is, however, clogged with one stipulation, that the Secretary is to remain a Single Man. Here I smell Rickman. Thus are gone at once all Phillips' matrimonial dreams. Those verses which he wrote himself, and those which a superior pen (with modesty let me speak as I name no names) endited for him to Elisa, Amelia &c.—for Phillips was a wife-hunting, probably from the circumstance of his having formed an extreme rash connection in early life which paved the way to all his after misfortunes, but there is an obstinacy in human nature which such accidents only serve to whet on to try again. Pleasure thus at two entrances quite shut out—I hardly know how to determine of Phillips's result of happiness. He appears satisfyd, but never those bursts of gaiety, those moment-rules from the Cave of Despondency, that used to make his face shine and shew the lines which care had marked in it. I would bet an even wager he marries secretly, the Speaker finds it out, and he is reverted to his old Liberty and a hundred pounds a year—these are but speculations—I can think of no other news. I am going to eat Turbot &c. . . .

After "half-past four this day" (page 439) comes :—

Mary has ordered the bolt to my bedroom door inside to be taken off, and a practicable latch to be put on, that I may not bar myself in and be suffocated by my neckcloth, so we have taken all precautions,

three watchmen are engaged to carry the body upstairs—Pray for me —They keep bothering me.

Letter 221, *page* 494

Here should come a letter to Rickman, dated December 30, 1816. The chief news in it is that George Dyer has been made one of Lord Stanhope's ten Residuary Legatees. This, says Lamb, will settle Dyer's fate: he will have to throw his dirty glove at some one and marry.

Letter 234, *page* 522. *To Manning*

At the beginning of this letter is an unprinted passage saying that Charles Lloyd and his wife are in London and that such proximity is not too comfortable. "Would you like to see him?" or "isn't it better to lean over a stile in a sort of careless easy half astronomical position eyeing the blue expanse?"

Letter 237, *page* 529

After this should come Letter 237A:—

CHARLES AND MARY LAMB TO SAMUEL JAMES ARNOLD

[No date. ? 1819.]

DEAR SIR,

We beg to convey our kindest acknowledgements to Mr. Arnold for the very pleasant privilege he has favoured us with. My yearly holidays end with next week, during which we shall be mostly in the country, and afterwards avail ourselves fully of the privilege. Sincerely wishing you crowded houses, etc.,

We remain,

Yours truly,

CH. & M. LAMB.

Arnold, brother-in-law of Ayrton, was the lessee of the Lyceum, where Miss Kelly was acting when Lamb proposed to her in 1819. This letter may belong to that time.

Letter 246, *page* 541

After this should come the following (Letter 246A), which tells us what the Lambs were doing in the summer of 1820:—

CHARLES LAMB TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[P.M. July 13, 1820.]

DEAR SIR, I do not know whose fault it is we have not met so long. We are almost always out of town. You must come and beat up our quarters there, when we return from Cambridge. It is not in our power to accept your invitation. To-day we dine out; and set out for Cambridge on Saturday morning. Friday of course will be past in

packing, &c., moreover we go from Dalston. We return from Cam. in 4 weeks, and will contrive an early meeting. Meantime believe us,

Sincerely yours,

C. L., &c.

Thursday.

It was during this visit to Cambridge that Lamb wrote his *Elia* essay on "Oxford in the Vacation."

Letter 265, *page* 560

Here should come a letter from Lamb to Rickman, dated November 20, 1821, referring to Admiral Burney's death. "I have been used to death lately. Poor Jim White's departure last year first broke the spell. I had been so fortunate as to have lost no friends in that way for many long years, and began to think people did not die." He says that Mary Lamb has recovered from a long illness and is pretty well resigned to John Lamb's death.

Letter 359, *page* 689

Here should come the following note and acrostic (Letter 359A), kindly placed at my disposal by Major Butterworth. Aitken was an Edinburgh bookseller who edited *The Cabinet; or, The Selected Beauties of Literature*, 1824, 1825 and 1831. The particular interest of the letter is that it shows Lamb to have wanted to publish *Rosamund Gray* a third time in his life. Hitherto we had only his statement that Hessey said that the world would not bear it. Aitken printed the story in *The Cabinet* for 1831. Previously he had printed "Dream Children" and "The Inconveniences of being Hanged."

I have been told (but have had no opportunity of verifying the statement) that the Buttons, for one of whom the appended acrostic was written, were cousins of the Lambs.

CHARLES LAMB TO JOHN AITKEN

Colebrooke Cottage, Islington, July 5, 1825.

DEAR SIR,—With thanks for your last No. of the Cabinet—as I cannot arrange with a London publisher to reprint "Rosamund Gray" as a book, it will be at your service to admit into the Cabinet as soon as you please.

Your hble. servt,
CHS. LAMB.

EMMA, eldest of your name,
Meekly trusting in her God
Midst the red-hot plough-shares trod,
And unscorch'd preserved her fame.
By that test if *you* were tried,
Ugly flames might be defied;
Though devouring fire 's a glutton,
Through the trial you might go
"On the light fantastic toe,"
Nor for plough-shares care a BUTTON.

Letter 401, *page* 738

A letter to an anonymous correspondent, in the summer of 1827, has an amusing passage concerning Emma Isola's Latin. Lamb says that they made Cary laugh by translating "Blast you" into such elegant verbiage as "Deus afflet tibi." He adds, "How some parsons would have goggled and what would Hannah More say? I don't like clergymen, but here and there one. Cary, the Dante Cary, is a model, quite as plain as Parson Primrose, without a shade of silliness."

On July 21, 1827, is a letter to Mr. Dillon, whom I do not identify, saying that Lamb has been teaching Emma Isola Latin for the past seven weeks.

Letter 405, *page* 746

Following this letter, under the date August 29, 1827, should come a letter from Lamb to Robert Jameson (husband of Mrs. Jameson) asking him to interest himself in Miss Isola's career. "Our friend Coleridge will bear witness to the very excellent manner in which she read to him some of the most difficult passages in the Paradise Lost."

Letter 439, *page* 778

Here should come a letter to Rickman, dated September 11, 1828, in which Lamb thanks him for a present of nuts and apples, but is surprised that apples should be offered to the owner of a "whole tree, almost an orchard," and "an apple chamber redolent" to boot.

Here should come a letter from Lamb to Louisa Holcroft, dated October 2, 1828, in which, so soon after Mary Lamb's determination to be the letter writer of the family, he says, "Mary Lamb has written her last letter in this world," adding that he has been left her *writing legatee*. He calls geese "those pretty birds that look like snow in summer, and cackle like ice breaking up."

Here should come (Letter 439A) a long Latin letter to Rickman, dated October 4, 1828. Canon Ainger prints only the Latin. I append an English version:—

Postmark Oct. 3, 1828.

I have been thinking of sending some kind of an answer in Latin to your very elaborate letter, but something has arisen every day to hinder me. To begin with our awkward friend M. B. has been with us for a while, and every day and all day we have had such a lecture, you know how he stutters, on legal, mind, nothing but legal notices, that I have been afraid the Latin I want to write might prove rather barbaro-forensic than Ciceronian. He is swallowed up, body and soul, in law; he eats, drinks, plays (at the card table) Law, nothing but Law. He acts Ignoramus in the play so thoroughly, that you w^d

swear that in the inmost marrow of his head (is not this the proper anatomical term?) there have housed themselves not devils but pettifoggers, to bemuddle with their noisy chatter his own and his friends' wits. He brought here, 'twas all his luggage, a book, Fearn on Contingent Remainders. This book he has read so hard, and taken such infinite pains to understand, that the reader's brain has few or no Remainders to continge. Enough, however, of M. B. and his luggage. To come back to your claims upon me. Your return journey, with notes, I read again and again, nor have I done with them yet. You always make something fresh out of a hackneyed theme. Our milestones, you say, bristle with blunders, but I must shortly explain why I cannot comply with your directions herein.

Suppose I were to consult the local magnates about a matter of this kind.—Ha! says one of our waywardens or parish overseers,—What business is this of *yours?* Do you want to drop the Lodger and come out as a Householder?—Now you must know that I took this house of mine at Enfield, by an obvious domiciliary fiction, in my Sister's name, to avoid the bother and trouble of parish and vestry meetings, and to escape finding myself one day an overseer or big-wig of some sort. What then w^d be my reply to the above question?

Leisure I have secured: but of dignity, not a tittle. Besides, to tell you the truth, the aforesaid irregularities are, to my thinking, most entertaining, and in fact very touching indeed. Here am I, quit of worldly affairs of every kind; for if superannuation does not mean that, what does it mean? The world then, being, as the saying is, beyond my ken, and being myself entirely removed from any accurate distinctions of space or time, these mistakes in road-measure do not seriously offend me. For in the infinite space of the heavens above (which in this contracted sphere of mine I desire to imitate so far as may be) what need is there of milestones? Local distance has to do with mortal affairs. In my walks abroad, limited though they must be, I am quite at my own disposal, and on that account I have a good word for our Enfield clocks too. Their hands generally point without any servile reference to this Sun of our World, in his *sub*-Empyrean position. They strike too just as it happens, according to their own sweet wiles, —one—two—three—anything they like, and thus to me, a more fortunate Whittington, they pleasantly announce, that Time, so far as I am concerned, is no more. Here you have my reasons for not attending in this matter to the requests of a busy subsolar such as you are.

Furthermore, when I reach the milestone that counts from the Hicks-Hall that stands now, I own at once the Aulic dignity, and, were I a gaol-bird, I should shake in my shoes. When I reach the next which counts from the site of the old Hall, my thoughts turn to the fallen grandeur of the pile, and I reflect upon the perishable condition of the most imposing of human structures. Thus I banish from my soul all pride and arrogance, and with such meditations purify my heart from day to day. A wayfarer such as I am, may learn from Vincent Bourne, in words terser and neater than any of mine, the advantages

of milestones properly arranged. The lines are at the end of a little poem of his, called Milestones—(Do you remember it or shall I write it all out ?)

> How well the Milestones' use doth this express,
> Which make the miles [seem] more and way seem less.

What do you mean by this—I am borrowing hand and style from this youngster of mine—your son, I take it. The style looks, nay on careful inspection by these old eyes, is most clearly your very own, and the writing too. Either R's or the Devil's. I will defer your explanation till our next meeting—may it be soon.

My Latin failing me, as you may infer from erasures above, there is only this to add. Farewell, and be sure to give Mrs. Rickman my kind remembrances.

C. LAMB.

Enfield, Chase Side, 4th Oct., 1828. I can't put this properly into Latin. Dabam—what is it ?

Letter 449, *page* 793

This is a complete list of the contents of Emma Isola's Album, all autographs (from Quaritch's catalogue, September, 1886) :—

CHARLES LAMB. "What is an Album ?" a poem addressed to Miss Emma Isola.
— — "To Emma on her Twenty-first Birthday," May 25, 1830.
— — "Harmony in Unlikeness." Without date.
JOHN KEATS. "To my Brother," a sonnet on the birthday of his brother Tom, dated Nov. 18 (? 1814 or 1815).
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. "She dwelt among the untrodden ways," three verses of his poem on Lucy, copied in his own hand on March 18, 1837.
— — "Blessings be with them, and enduring praise," five lines of a sonnet dated Rydal, 1838.
ALFRED TENNYSON. "When Lazarus left his charnel-cave," four stanzas, undated.
THOMAS MOORE. "Woman gleans but sorrow," and note to Moxon, June, 1844.
LEIGH HUNT. "Apollo's Autograph," from an unpublished poem called "The Feast of the Violets." Undated, *circa* 1838.
THOMAS HOOD. "Dreams," a prose fragment, without date, *circa* 1840.
JAMES HOGG. "I'm a' gaen wrang," a song by the Ettrick Shepherd, *circa* 1830.
JOANNA BAILLIE. "Up! quit thy bower," a song, undated, *circa* 1830.
ROBERT SOUTHEY. Epitaph on himself, in verse, Feb. 18, 1837.
THOMAS CAMPBELL. "Victoria's sceptre o'er the waves," *circa* 1837.
ALLAN CUNNINGHAM. "The Pirate's Song," *circa* 1838.
CHARLES DIBDIN. "An Album's like the Dream of Hope," *circa* 1827.
BERNARD BARTON. "To Emma," with a note by Charles Lamb at foot, 1827.
WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR. "To Emma Isola," *circa* 1827.
BARRY CORNWALL. "To the Spirit of Italy," *circa* 1827.
SAMUEL ROGERS. Two letters, and a poem, "My Last," 1829-36.
FREDERICK LOCKER. A quatrain, dated July, 1873.
George Dyer, J. B. Dibdin, George Darley, Matilda Betham, H. F. Cary, Mrs. Piozzi, Edward Moxon, T. N. Talfourd, are the other writers.

Letter 461, *page* 808

After this should come the following (Letter 461A), from *The Mirror*, 1841 :—

CHARLES LAMB TO GEORGE DYER

Enfield, April 29, 1829.

DEAR DYER—As well as a bad pen can do it, I must thank you for your friendly attention to the wishes of our young friend Emma, who was packing up for Bury when your sonnet arrived, and was too hurried to express her sense of its merits. I know she will treasure up that and your second communication among her choicest rarities, as from her *grandfather's* friend, whom not having seen, she loves to hear talked of. The second letter shall be sent after her, with our first parcel to Suffolk, where she is, to us, alas dead and Bury'd; we sorely miss her. Should you at any hour think of four or six lines, to send her, addressed to herself simply, naming her grandsire, and to wish she may pass through life as much respected, with your own G. Dyer at the end, she would feel rich indeed, for the nature of an Album asks for verses that have not been in print before; but this quite at your convenience: and to be less trouble to yourself, four lines would be sufficient. Enfield has come out in summer beauty. Come when you will and we will give you a bed. Emma has left hers, you know. I remain, my dear Dyer, your affectionate friend,

CHARLES LAMB.

Lamb made the same pun—Bury'd—to George Dyer in his letter, on page 970, of December 5, 1808. His Album verses for Miss Isola I have not seen.

Letter 498, *page* 857

Here probably should come an undated letter to Mrs. John Rickman, accompanying a gift of *Album Verses*. Lamb says: "Will you re-give, or *lend* me, by the bearer, the one Volume of Juvenile Poetry? I have tidings of a second at Brighton." He proposes that he and Mrs. Rickman shall some day play old whist for the two.

Letter 557, *page* 911

Here should come a letter to Miss Rickman, dated May 23, 1833. "Perhaps, as Miss Kelly is just now in notoriety, it may amuse you to know that 'Barbara S.' is *all* of it true of *her*, being all communicated to me from her own mouth. The 'wedding' you of course found out to be Sally Burney's."

Letter 586, *page* 941. *To Mr. Childs*

Lamb sent Mr. Childs a copy of *John Woodvil* in which he wrote:—

FROM THE AUTHOR

In great haste, the Pig was *faultless*,—we got decently merry after it and chirpt and sang "Heigh! Bessy Bungay!" in honour of the Sender. Pray let me have a line to say you got the Books; keep the *1st vol.*—two or three months, so long as it comes home at last.

APPENDIX III

CONSISTING OF SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES ON THE FIRST FIVE VOLUMES OF THIS EDITION, TOGETHER WITH NEW MATTER BY LAMB

Errors of my own and typographical blunders in the previous volumes must be left for correction in a new edition, if that should be called for; but a few omissions may be supplied here and one or two of the major mistakes set right.

I am also able to include some authentic new writings by Lamb and two or three interesting conjectural pieces.

VOL. I

MISCELLANEOUS PROSE

It was wrong to include in this volume the little article on "Samuel Johnson the Whig," on page 350, first associated with Lamb by J. E. Babson in *Eliana*. The criticism, although in Lamb's hand, was merely copied by him from Coleridge. It will be found in Coleridge's *Table Talk*.

The little article on "London Fogs," on page 351, although attributed to Lamb by William Ayrton, is in reality a passage from an essay on the Months by Leigh Hunt in the *New Monthly Magazine*.

The article on "Shakspeare's Characters," on page 367, thought to be Lamb's by Alexander Ireland, is part of Hazlitt's essay on "Henry VI." in the volume called *Shakspeare's Characters*, 1817, which (to make my error worse) was dedicated to Lamb.

I am inclined now to doubt if Lamb were the author of the critical note on Gray's Latin Ode on page 381. Mr. Dobell's suggestion that Sir Charles Abraham Elton was the author seems to me very reasonable.

The little sketch "A True Story," on page 329, attributed to Lamb by the editor of *The Talisman*, 1831, is thought by Mr. Swinburne and others to be Leigh Hunt's. Leigh Hunt, however, does not seem to have reprinted it; and absolute proof of his authorship not being offered, I should like, I think, to retain it in its present place.

Early Journalism, I

Writing to Rickman about his *Morning Post* work, in January, 1802, Lamb says that in addition to certain other things it was he who made the Lord Mayor's bed. The reference is undoubtedly to the following little article on January 4, 1802 :—

Grand State Bed

Ever since an account of the Marquis of Exeter's Grand State Bed appeared in the fashionable world, grandeur in this article of furniture has become quite the rage. Among others the Lord Mayor, feeling for the dignity of the city of London, has petitioned the Corporation for one of great splendour to be placed in the Mansion-house, *at the City's expence*.

We have been favoured with a description of this magnificent state bed, the choice of his Lordship. The body is formed by the callipee, or under shell of a large turtle, carved in mahogany, and sufficiently capacious to receive two well-fed people. The callipash, or upper shell, forms the canopy. The posts are four gigantic figures richly gilt: two of them accurate copies of Gog and Magog; the other two represent Sir William Walworth and the last man in armour. Cupids with custards are the supporters. The curtains are of mazarine purple, and curiously wrought with the series of the idle and industrious apprentice from Hogarth, in gold embroidery; but the vallens exceed description; *there*, the various incidents in the life of Whittington are painted. The mice in one of the compartments are done so much to the life, that his Lordship's cat, who is an accurate judge of mice, was deceived. The quilt is of fashionable patchwork figures, the description of which we shall not anticipate, as, we understand, Mr. Birch has obtained a sketch of it for his large Twelfth Cake. The whole is worthy of the taste of the first Magistrate of the first City in the world.

Early Journalism, II

On January 6 (Twelfth Night), 1802, the following fable was printed in the *Morning Post*. That Lamb was the author no one need have any doubt after reading the *Elia* essay "Rejoicings on the New Year's Coming of Age" :—

Fable for Twelfth Day

Once upon a high and solemn occasion all the great *fasts* and *festivals* in the year presented themselves before the throne of *Apollo, God* of *Days*.—Each brought an offering in his hand, as is the custom all over the *East*, that no man shall appear before the presence of the King empty-handed. *Shrove-Tuesday* was there with his *pan-cakes*, and *Ash-Wednesday* with his oblation of *fish*. *Good Friday* brought the mystical *bun*. *Christmas-Day* came bending underneath an intolerable load of *turkeys* and *mince-pies*, his snow-white temples shaded with *holly* and the sacred *misletoe*, and *singing* a *carol* as he advanced.

Next came the *Thirtieth* of *January*, bearing a *calf's-head* in a charger; but *Apollo* no sooner understood the emblematical meaning of the offering, than the stomach of the *God* turned sick, and with visible indignation and abhorrence he ordered the unfortunate *Day* out of his presence—the contrite *Day* returned in a little time, bearing in his hands a *Whig* (a sort of cake well-tempered and delicious)—the *God* with smiles accepted the atonement, and the happy *Day* understood that his peace was made, he promising never to bring such a dish into the presence of a *God* again. Then came the august *Fourth* of *June*, crowned with such a crown as British Monarchs commonly wear, leading into the presence the venerable *Nineteenth* of *May*—*Apollo* welcomed the royal pair, and placed them nearest to himself, and welcomed their noble progeny, their eldest-born and heir, the accomplished *Twelfth* of *August*, with all his brave brothers and handsome sisters. Only the merry *First* of *April*, who is retained in the Court of *Apollo* as *King's Jester*, made some mirth by his reverent inquiries after the health of the *Eighteenth* of *January*, who, being a *kept* mistress, had not been deemed a proper personage to be introduced into such an assembly. *Apollo*, laughing, rebuked the petulance of his wit; so all was mirth and good humour in the palace—only the sorrowful *Epiphany* stood silent and abashed—he was *poor*, and had come before the King without an oblation. The *God* of *Days* perceived his confusion, and turning to the *Muses* (who are *nine*), and to the *Graces*, his hand-maids (who are *three* in number), he beckoned to them, and gave to them in charge to prepare a *Cake* of the richest and preciousest ingredients: they obeyed, tempering with their fine and delicate fingers the spices of the *East*, the bread-flour of the *West*, with the fruits of the *South*, pouring over all the *Ices* of the *North*. The God himself crowned the whole with *talismanic figures*, which contained this wondrous virtue—that whosoever ate of the *Cake* should forthwith become *Kings* and *Queens*. Lastly, by his heralds, he invested the trembling and thankful *Epiphany* with the privilege of presenting this Cake before the King upon an annual festival for ever. Now this Cake is called *Twelfth Cake* upon earth, after the *number* of the virgins who fashioned the same, being *nine* and *three*.

Miss Kelly

In *The Examiner* for December 20, 1818, after Leigh Hunt's criticism of Kenney's comedy "A Word for the Ladies" is the following paragraph. Leigh Hunt's criticism is signed: this is not, nor is it joined to the article. There is, I think, good reason to believe it to be Lamb's:—

It was not without a feeling of pain, that we observed Miss Kelly among the *spectators* on the first night of the new comedy. What does she do before the curtain? She should have been on the stage. With such youth, such talents,—

> Those powers of pleasing, with that will to please,

it is too much that she should be forgotten discarded, laid aside like

an old fashion. It really is not yet the season for her "among the wastes of time to go." Is it Mr. STEPHEN KEMBLE, or the Sub-Committee; or what *heavy body* is it, which interposes itself between us and this light of the stage?

"LETTER TO AN OLD GENTLEMAN WHOSE EDUCATION HAS BEEN NEGLECTED"

Vol. I., page 213

In the *London Magazine* for December, 1823, under "The Lion's Head," is the following jesting paragraph in which it is possible perhaps to see the hand of the author of the "Letter to the Old Gentleman."

The following admirable letter seems to refer to the observations on Kant, contained in the Opium Eater's Letters. Perhaps that acute logician may be able to discover its meaning: or if not, he may think it worth preserving as an illustration of Shakespeare's profound knowledge of character displayed in Ancient Pistol.

> Can Neptune sleep?—Is Willich dead?—Him who wielded the trident of Albion! Is it thus you trample on the ashes of my friend? All the dreadful energies of thought—all the sophistry of fiction and the triumphs of the human intellect are waving o'er his peaceful grave. "He understood not Kant." Peace then to the harmless invincible. I have long been thinking of presenting the world with a Metaphysical Dictionary—of elucidating Locke's romance.—I await with impatience Kant in English. Give me that! Your letter has awakened me to a sense of your merits. Beware of squabbles; I know the literary infirmities of man. Scott rammed his nose against mortals—he grasped at death for fame to chaunt the victory.
>
> THINE.

How is the Opium Eater?

LETTER TO SOUTHEY

Vol. I., page 226

In the *London Magazine* for December, 1823, under "The Lion's Head," is the following:—

We have to thank an unknown correspondent for the following

SONNET

Occasioned by reading in ELIA'S LETTER to Dr. Southey, that the admirable translator of Dante, the modest and amiable C——, still remained a curate—or, as a waggish friend observed,—after such a *Translation* should still be without *Preferment*.*

O Thou! who enteredst the tangled wood,
By that same spirit trusting to be led,
That on the first discoverer's footsteps shed
The light with which another world was view'd;

* We suspect, by the way, this is not strictly the case, though we believe it is very nearly so.

Thou hast well scann'd the path, and firmly stood
With measured niceness in his holy tread,
Till, mounting up thy star-illumined head,
Thou lookedst in upon the perfect good!

What treasures does thy golden key unfold!
Riches immense, the pearl beyond all price,
And saintly truths to gross ears vainly told!

Say, gilds thy earthly path some Beatrice?—
If bread thou want'st, they will but give thee stones,
And when thou'rt gone, will quarrel for thy bones!

—An Unworthy Rector.

Hood's "Progress of Cant"

There can be, I think, very little doubt that Lamb was the author of the following criticism of Hood's picture "The Progress of Cant" in the *New Monthly Magazine* for February, 1826. Lamb, we know, praised the detail of the Beadle, reproduced in Hone's *Every-Day Book*, under the title "An Appearance of the Season" (see Vol. I., page 307). This is the *New Monthly Magazine* article:—

The Progress of Cant

A wicked wag has produced a caricature under this title, in which he marshalleth all the projected improvements of the age, and maketh them take their fantastic progress before the eyes of the scorner. It is a spirited etching, almost as abundant in meaning as in figures, and hath a reprobate eye to a corner—an Hogarthian vivification of post and placard. Priests, anti-priests, architects, politicians, reformers, flaming loyalty-men, high and low, rich and poor, one with another, all go on "progressing," as the Americans say. Life goes on, at any rate; and there is so much merriment on all sides, that for our parts, inclined to improvements as we are, we should be willing enough to join in the laugh throughout, if the world were as merry as the artist. The houses are as much to the purpose as the pedestrians. There is the office of the Peruvian Mining Company, in dismal, dilapidated condition; a barber's shop, with "Nobody to be shaved during divine service," the *h* worn out; two boarding-schools for young ladies and gentlemen, very neighbourly; and the public-house, called the Angel and Punch-Bowl, by T. Moore. Among the crowd is a jolly, but vehement, reverend person holding a flag, inscribed, "The Church in Anger," the *D* for danger being hidden by another flag, inscribed, "Converted Jews." Then there is the Caledonian Chap (*el* being obstructed in the same way), who holds a pennon, crying out, "No Theatre!" Purity of Election, with a bludgeon, very drunk; and, above all, a petty fellow called the Great Unknown, with his hat over his eyes, and a constable's staff peeping out of his pocket. Some of the faces and figures are very clever, particularly the Barber; the Saving-banks man; the Jew Boy picking the pocket; the Charity Boy and the Beadle. The Beadle is rich from head to foot. Nathless, we like not to see Mrs. Fry so roasted: we are at a loss to know why the Blacks deserve to be made Black Devils; and are not aware that the proposal of an University in

London has occasioned, or is likely to occasion, any sort of cant. However, there is no harm done where a cause can afford a joke ; and where it cannot, the more it is joked at, the better.

Mr. Ephraim Wagstaff

In *The Table Book*, 1827, beginning on column 185, Vol. II., is the following humorous story which there is some reason to believe may be Lamb's. The late Mr. Dykes Campbell had no doubt whatever, the proof residing not only in internal evidence but in the rhymed story of "Dick Strype," printed below, on page 989, which we may assume Lamb to have written. The subject of the two stories, prose and verse, is the same, and the style of Ephraim Wagstaff is not altogether unlike that of Juke Judkins. I am not however quite convinced.

For "The Table Book"

Mr. Ephraim Wagstaff, His Wife and Pipe

About the middle of Shoemaker-row, near to Broadway, Blackfriars, there resided for many years a substantial hardwareman, named Ephraim Wagstaff. He was short in stature, tolerably well favoured in countenance, and singularly neat and clean in his attire. Everybody in the neighbourhood looked upon him as a "warm" old man; and when he died, the property he left behind him did not bely the preconceived opinion. It was all personal, amounted to about nineteen thousand pounds; and, as he was childless, it went to distant relations, with the exception of a few hundred pounds bequeathed to public charities.

The family of Ephraim Wagstaff, both on the male and female sides, was respectable, though not opulent. His maternal grandfather, he used to say, formed part of the executive government in the reign of George I., whom he served as petty constable in one of the manufacturing districts during a long period. The love of office seems not to have been hereditary in the family; or perhaps the opportunities of gratifying it did not continue; for, with that single exception, none of his ancestors could boast of official honours. The origin of the name is doubtful. On a first view, it seems evidently the conjunction of two names brought together by marriage or fortune. In the "Tatler" we read about the *staff* in a variety of combinations, under one of which the popular author of that work chose to designate himself, and thereby conferred immortality on the name of Bickerstaff. Our friend Ephraim was no great wit, but he loved a joke, particularly if he made it himself; and he used to say, whenever he heard any one endeavouring to account for his name, that he believed it originated in the marriage of a Miss Staff to some Wag who lived near her; and who, willing to show his gallantry, and at the same time his knowledge of French customs, adopted the fashion of that sprightly people, by adding her family name to his own. The conjecture is at least probable, and so we must leave it.

At the age of fifty-two it pleased heaven to deprive Mr. Wagstaff of his beloved spouse Barbara. The bereavement formed an era in his

history. Mrs. Wagstaff was an active, strong woman, about ten years older than himself, and one sure to be missed in any circle wherein she had once moved. She was indeed no cipher. Her person was tall and bony, her face, in hue, something between brown and red, had the appearance of having been scorched. Altogether her qualities were truly commanding. She loved her own way exceedingly; was continually on the alert to have it; and, in truth, generally succeeded. Yet such was her love of justice, that she has been heard to aver repeatedly, that she never (she spoke the word *never* emphatically) opposed her husband, but when he was decidedly in the wrong. Of these occasions, it must also be mentioned, she generously took upon herself the trouble and responsibility of being the sole judge. There was one point, however, on which it would seem that Mr. Wagstaff had contrived to please himself exclusively; although, how he had managed to resist so effectually the remonstrances and opposition which, from the structure of his wife's mind he must necessarily have been doomed to encounter, must ever remain a secret. The fact was this: Ephraim had a peculiarly strong attachment to a pipe; his affection for his amiable partner scarcely exceeding that which he entertained for that lively emblem of so many sage contrivances and florid speeches, ending like it—in smoke. In the times of his former wives (for twice before had he been yoked in matrimony) he had indulged himself with it unmolested. Not so with Mrs. Wagstaff the third. Pipes and smoking she held in unmitigated abhorrence: but having, by whatever means, been obliged to submit to their introduction, she wisely avoided all direct attempts to abate what she called among her friends "the nuisance;" and, like a skilful general, who has failed of securing victory, she had recourse to such stratagems as might render it as little productive as possible to the enemy. Ephraim, aware how matters stood, neglected no precaution to guard against his wife's manœuvres—meeting, of course, with various success. Many a time did her ingenuity contrive an accident, by which his pipe and peace of mind were at once demolished; and, although there never could be any difficulty in replacing the former by simply sending out for that purpose, yet he has confessed, that when he contemplated the possibility of offering too strong an excitement to the shrill tones of his beloved's voice, (the only pipe she willingly tolerated,) he waved that proceeding, and submitted to the sacrifice as much the lesser evil. At length Mrs. Wagstaff was taken ill, an inflammation on her lungs was found to be her malady, and that crisis appeared to be fast approaching, when

> The doctor leaves the house with sorrow,
> Despairing of his fee to-morrow.

The foreboding soon proved correct; and, every thing considered, perhaps it ought not to excite much surprise, that when Ephraim heard from the physician that there was little or no chance of her recovery, he betrayed no symptoms of excessive emotion, but mumbling something unintelligibly, in which the doctor thought he caught the sound

of the words "Christian duty of resignation," he quietly filled an additional pipe that evening. The next day Mrs. Wagstaff expired, and in due time her interment took place in the churchyard of St. Ann, Blackfriars, every thing connected therewith being conducted with the decorum becoming so melancholy an event, and which might be expected from a man of Mr. Wagstaff's gravity and experience. The funeral was a walking one from the near vicinity to the ground; and but for an untimely slanting shower of rain, no particular inconvenience would have been felt by those who were assembled on that occasion; that casualty, however, caused them to be thoroughly drenched; and, in reference to their appearance, it was feelingly observed by some of the by-standers, that they had seldom seen so many tears on the faces of mourners.—

To be continued—(perhaps).

NEMO.

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

In column 857 of *The Table Book*, 1827, Vol. II., is the following letter to Hone, which is very likely to be from Lamb's pen. Waltham Abbey was a favourite objective of his in his long Essex and Hertfordshire rambles:—

WALTHAM, ESSEX

To the Editor

SIR,—The following epitaph is upon a plain gravestone in the churchyard of Waltham Abbey. Having some point, it may perhaps be acceptable for the *Table Book*. I was told that the memory of the worthy curate is still held in great esteem by the inhabitants of that place.

REV. ISAAC COLNETT,
Fifteen years curate of this Parish,
Died March 1, 1801—Aged 43 years.

Shall pride a heap of sculptured marble raise,
Some worthless, unmourn'd, titled fool to praise,
And shall we not by one poor gravestone show
Where pious, worthy Colnett sleeps below?

Surely common decency, if they are deficient in antiquarian feeling, should induce the inhabitants of Waltham Cross to take some measures, if not to restore, at least to preserve from further decay and dilapidation the remains of that beautiful monument of conjugal affection, the cross erected by Edward I. It is now in a sad disgraceful state.

I am, &c.,

Z.

VOL. II

ELIA AND THE LAST ESSAYS OF ELIA

"MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST"

Vol. II., page 32

A little essay on card playing in the *Every-Day Book*, the authorship of which is unknown, but which may be Hone's, ends with the following pleasant passage, which might be added to my notes:—

"Cousin Bridget and the gentle Elia seem beings of that age wherein lived Pamela, whom, with 'old Sarah Battle,' we may imagine entering their room, and sitting down with them to a *square* game. Yet Bridget and Elia live in our own times: she, full of kindness to all, and of soothings to Elia especially;—he, no less kind and consoling to Bridget, in all simplicity holding converse with the world, and, ever and anon, giving us scenes that Metzu and De Foe would admire, and portraits that Deuner and Hogarth would rise from their graves to paint."

"The Praise of Chimney-Sweepers"

Vol. II., page 108

Leigh Hunt, in *The Examiner* for May 5, 1822, quoted some of the best sentences of this essay. On May 12 a correspondent (L. E.) wrote a very agreeable letter supporting Lamb's plea for generosity to sweeps and remarking thus upon Lamb himself:—

"I read the modicum on 'Chimney-Sweepers,' which your last paper contained, with pleasure. It appears to be the production of that sort of mind which you justly denominate 'gifted;' but which is greatly undervalued by the majority of men, because they have no sympathies in common with it. Many who might partially appreciate such a spirit, do nevertheless object to it, from the snap-dragon nature of its coruscations, which shine themselves, but shew every thing around them to disadvantage. Your deep philosophers also, and all the laborious professors of the art of sinking, may elevate their nasal projections, and demand 'cui bono'? For my part I prefer a little enjoyment to a great deal of philosophy. It is these gifted minds that enliven our habitations, and contribute so largely to those *every-day* delights, which constitute, after all, the chief part of mortal happiness. Such minds are ever active—their light, like the vestal lamp, is ever burning—and in my opinion the man who refines the common intercourse of life, and wreaths the altars of our household gods with flowers, is more deserving of respect and gratitude than all the sages who waste their lives in elaborate speculations, which tend to nothing, and which *we* cannot comprehend—nor they neither."

On June 2, however, "J. C. H." intervened to correct what he considered the "dangerous spirit" of Lamb's essay, which said so little of the hardships of the sweeps, but rather suggested that they were a happy class. J. C. H. then put the case of the unhappy sweep with some eloquence, urging upon all householders the claims of the mechanical sweeping machine.

The Tombs in the Abbey

Vol. II., page 207

In *The Examiner* for April 8, 1821, is quoted from *The Traveller* the following epigram, which may possibly be Lamb's, and which shows at any rate that his protest against entrance fees for churches was in the air.

On a Visit to St. Paul's

What can be hop'd from Priests who, 'gainst the Poor,
For lack of two-pence, shut the church's door;
Who, true successors of the ancient leaven,
Erect a turnpike on the road to Heaven?
"Knock, and it shall be open'd," saith our Lord;
"Knock, and pay two-pence," say the Chapter Board:
The Showman of the booth the fee receives,
And God's house is again a "den of thieves."

"Rejoicings upon the New Year's Coming of Age"

Vol. II., page 235

For the first draft of this essay—or at any rate for the germ of it—see page 980.

VOL. V

POEMS AND PLAYS

Lamb's Earliest Poem

To the *Illustrated London News* for December 26, 1891, the late Mr. Dykes Campbell contributed an account of a book that had belonged to James Boyer, of Christ's Hospital, in which his best scholars transcribed compositions of more than usual merit. All Lamb's Grecians figure here. Lamb is represented by the following :—

Mille viæ mortis

What time in bands of slumber all were laid,
To Death's dark court, methought I was convey'd;
In realms it lay far hid from mortal sight,
And gloomy tapers scarce kept out the night.

On ebon throne the King of Terrors sate;
Around him stood the ministers of Fate;
On fell destruction bent, the murth'rous band
Waited attentively his high command.

Here pallid Fear & dark Despair were seen.
And Fever here with looks forever lean,
Swoln Dropsy, halting Gout, profuse of woes,
And Madness fierce & hopeless of repose,

Wide-wasting Plague; but chief in honour stood
More-wasting War, insatiable of blood;
With starting eye-balls, eager for the word;
Already brandish'd was the glitt'ring sword.

Wonder and fear alike had fill'd my breast,
And thus the grisly Monarch I addrest—

"Of earth-born Heroes why should Poets sing,
"And thee neglect, neglect the greatest King?
"To thee ev'n Cæsar's self was forc'd to yield
"The glories of Pharsalia's well-fought field."

When, with a frown, "Vile caitiff, come not here,"
Abrupt cried Death; "shall flatt'ry soothe my ear?"
"Hence, or thou feel'st my dart!" the Monarch said.
Wild terror seiz'd me, & the vision fled.

Charles Lamb.
1789.

An Early Tale in Verse

Writing to John Rickman in January, 1802, Lamb says, "My editor [Dan Stuart of the *Morning Post*] uniformly rejects all that I do, considerable in length. I shall only do paragraphs with now and then a slight poem, such as Dick Strype, if you read it, which was but a long epigram." The verses, which appeared on January 6, 1802, may be compared with the story of Ephraim Wagstaff, on page 984, written twenty-five years later. It has been pointed out that *Points of Misery*, 1823, by Charles Molloy Westmacott (Bernard Blackmantle of the *English Spy*), contains the poem with slight alterations. But Westmacott reaped where he could, and his book is confessedly not wholly original. Lamb seems to me to admit authorship by implication fairly completely. Westmacott was only thirteen when it was first printed.

Dick Strype; or, The Force of Habit

A Tale—By Timothy Bramble

Habits *are stubborn things:*
And by the time a man is turn'd of *forty*,
His *ruling passion's* grown so haughty
There is no clipping of its wings.
The amorous roots have taken earth, and fix
And never shall P—TT leave his juggling tricks,
Till H——Y quits his metre with his pride,
Till W——M learns to flatter regicide,
Till hypocrite-enthusiasts cease to vant
And *Mister* W——E leaves off to cant.
The truth will best be shewn,
By a familiar instance of our own.

Dick Strype
Was a dear friend and lover of the pipe;
He us'd to say, *one pipe of Kirkman's best*
Gave life a *zest*.
To him 'twas meat, and drink, and physic,
To see the friendly vapour
Curl round his midnight taper,
And the black fume
Clothe all the room,
In clouds as dark as *science metaphysic*.
So still he smok'd, and drank, and crack'd his joke;
And, had he *single* tarried
He might have smok'd, and still grown old in smoke:
But Richard *married*.
His wife was one, who carried
The *cleanly virtues* almost to a vice,
She was so *nice:*
And thrice a week, above, below,
The house was scour'd from top to toe,

And all the floors were rubb'd so bright,
You dar'd not walk upright
For fear of sliding:
But that she took a pride in.

Of all things else REBECCA STRYPE
Could least endure a *pipe*.
She rail'd upon the filthy herb tobacco,
Protested that the noisome vapour
Had spoilt the best chintz curtains and the paper
And cost her many a pound in stucco:
And then she quoted our *King James*, who saith
"Tobacco is the Devil's breath."
When wives *will* govern, husbands *must* obey;
For many a day
DICK mourn'd and miss'd his favourite tobacco,
And curs'd REBECCA.

At length the day approach'd, his wife must die:
Imagine now the doleful cry
Of female friends, old aunts and cousins,
Who to the fun'ral came by dozens—
The undertaker's men and mutes
Stood at the gate in sable suits
With doleful looks,
Just like so many melancholy *rooks*.
Now cakes and wine are handed round,
Folks sigh, and drink, and drink, and sigh,
For Grief makes people dry:
But DICK is *missing*, nowhere to be found
Above, below, about
They searched the house throughout,
Each hole and secret entry,
Quite from the garret to the pantry,
In every corner, cupboard, nook and shelf,
And all concluded he had *hang'd* himself.
At last they found him—reader, guess you where—
'Twill make you stare—
Perch'd on REBECCA'S *Coffin*, at his rest,
SMOKING A PIPE OF KIRKMAN'S BEST.

"FAREWELL TO TOBACCO"

To the note to the "Farewell to Tobacco" I might have added the following pleasant verses in *The Table Book*, 1827, which, appearing in the same number that contained the tenth instalment of the Garrick Plays, must have been seen by Lamb and probably pleased him:—

The Smoker's Song

For The Table Book

For thy sake, Tobacco, I
Would do any thing but die!
CHARLES LAMB.

There is a tiny weed, man,
That grows far o'er the sea, man;
The juice of which does more bewitch
Than does the gossip's tea, man.

Its name is call'd tobacco,
'Tis used near and far, man;
The car-man chews—but I will choose
The daintier cigar, man.

'Tis dainty ev'n in shape, man—
So round, so smooth, so long, man!
If you're a churl, 'twill from you hurl
Your spleen—you'll sing a song, man!

If you will once permit it
To touch your swelling lip, man,
You soon shall see 'twill sweeter be
Than what the bee doth sip, man!

If e'er you are in trouble,
This will your trouble still, man,
On sea and land 'tis at command,
An idle hour to kill, man!

And if the blind god, Cupid,
Should strike you to the heart, man,
Take up a glass, and toast your lass—
And—ne'er from smoking part, man!

And also if you're married,
In Hymen's chains fast bound, man;
To plague your wife out of her life,
Smoke still the whole year round, man!

How sweet 'tis of an evening
When wint'ry winds do blow, man,
As 'twere in spite, to take a pipe,
And smoke by th' fire's glow, man!

The sailor in his ship, man,
When wildly rolls the wave, man,
His pipe will smoke, and crack his joke
Above his yawning grave, man!

The soldier, in the tavern,
Talks of the battle's roar, man:
With pipe in hand, he gives command,
And thus he lives twice o'er, man!

All classes in this world, man,
Have each their own enjoyment,
But with a pipe, they're *all* alike—
'Tis every one's employment!

Of all the various pleasures
That on this earth there are, man,
There's nought to *me* affords such glee
As a pipe or sweet cigar, man!

O. N. Y.

"Harmony in Unlikeness"

The reference to Maria in this sonnet (Vol. V., pages 54 and 311) is not to Mary Lamb, as I supposed, but to a schoolfellow of Emma Isola's.

"To Emma, Learning Latin and Desponding"

In its original form this sonnet (see Vol. V., page 83) in its fifth line ran thus :—

(In new tasks hardest still the first appears).

Derwent Coleridge read it in 1853 in Mrs. Moxon's album, and copying it out, sent it to his wife, saying that he wished Sissy (his daughter Christabel) to get it by heart. He added this note : "Charles Lamb having discovered that this Sonnet consisted but of thirteen lines, Miss Lamb inserted the 5th, which interrupts the flow and repeats a rhime." Derwent Coleridge goes on to suggest two alternative lines :—

And hope may surely chase desponding fears

or

Let hope encouraged chase desponding fears.

Lamb, however, had already amended the fifth line (as in *Blackwood's Magazine*) to—

To young beginnings natural are these fears.

A New Epigram

The letter to Rickman, dated January 14, 1802, recently printed by Canon Ainger, contains an epigram by Lamb on Count Rumford which was excluded from the "Twelfth Night Characters" in the *Morning Post* on January 7 and 8. It runs thus :—

Count Rumford

I deal in aliments fictitious
And teaze the poor with soups nutritious.
Of bones and flesh I make dilution
And belong to the National Institution.

The same letter shows us that the epigram on Dr. Solomon (see Vol. V., page 106) which *The Champion* printed in 1820, was also written for the "Twelfth Night Characters" in 1802. Solomon was then alive.

On the *Literary Gazette*

The epigram in Vol. V., page 109, was printed in *The Examiner* for August 22, 1830—a fact I have only recently lighted upon. It then ran thus :—

In merry England I computed once
The number of the dunces—dunce for dunce;
There were *four hundred*, if I don't forget,
All readers of the L——y G——e;
But if the author to himself keep true,
In some short months they'll be reduced to *two*.

The Examiner began the attack on August 14, 1830. All the epigrams are signed T. A. This means that if Lamb wrote the above, he wrote all; which is not, I think, likely. I do not reproduce them, the humour of punning upon the name of the editor of the *Literary Gazette* being a little outmoded.

T. A. may, of course, have been Lamb's pseudonymous signature. If so, he may have chosen it as a joke upon his friend Thomas Allsop. But since one of the epigrams is addressed to himself I doubt if Lamb was the author.

Prologue to "Remorse"

These verses (see Vol. V., page 125) as printed are different from those which were spoken at the theatre by Mr. Carr. A writer in the *Theatrical Inquisitor* for February, 1813, in his contemptuous criticism, refers to several passages that are no longer extant. I quote from an account of the matter by the late Mr. Dykes Campbell in the *Illustrated London News,* October 22, 1892:—

I am afraid the true text of Lamb's "Rejected Address," even as modified for use as a prologue, has not come down to us. This is how the severe and suspicious *Inquisitor* describes it and its twin brother the epilogue—

The Prologue and Epilogue were among the most stupid productions of the modern muse; the former was, in all probability, a Rejected Address, for it contained many eulogiums on the beauty and magnificence of the "dome" of Drury; talked of the waves being not quite dry, and expressed the happiness of the bard at being the first whose muse had soared within its limits. More stupid than the doggerel of Twiss, and more affected than the pretty verses of Miles Peter Andrews, the Epilogue proclaimed its author and the writer of the Prologue to be par nobile fratrum, in rival dulness both pre-eminent.

The reader of Lamb's prologue will find little of all this in it but there is no reason for doubting the critic's account of what he heard at the theatre. It is not at all unlikely that it was this paragraph which suggested to Lamb the advisability of still further revising the "Rejected Address." In the prologue there is a good deal about the size of the theatre, as compared with "the Lyceum's petty sphere," and of how pleased Shakspere would have been had he been able to hear—

> When that dread curse of Lear's
> Had burst tremendous on a thousand ears:

rather an anti-climax, by the way, for it means an audience of but five hundred, which would have been a beggarly account for the new Drury. There is nothing either about its "dome," or about the scenery, except commonplaces so flat that one doubts if it be quite fair to quote them—

> The very use, since so essential grown,
> Of painted scenes, was to his [Shakspere's] stage unknown.

This is not an improvement on the "waves not yet quite dry," a Lamb-like touch which could not have been invented by the critic, and may go far to convince us of his veracity.

Above all, there is no trace of that splendidly audacious suggestion that Coleridge was the first "whose muse had soared" within the new dome—unless we find a blind one in the closing lines, supposing them to have been converted by the simple process of inversion. Instead of Coleridge being the first whose muse had soared in the new Drury, Drury was the first place in which his dramatic muse had soared.

"MR. H."

In *Notes and Queries*, August 3, 1889, the following amusing playbill was printed, contributed by Mr. Bertram Dobell :—

Theatre Royal, English Opera House, Strand.
Particularly Private.
This present FRIDAY, April 26, 1822,
Will be presented a FARCE called
Mr. H. . . .
(*N.B. This piece was damned at Drury Lane Theatre.*)
[Caste follows.]
Previous to which a PROLOGUE will be spoken by Mrs. EDWIN.
After the Farce (for the first Time in this country, and now performing with immense success in Paris)
A French *Petite Comedie*, called
Le Comedien D'Etampes.
(N.B. *This piece was never acted in London, and may very probably be damned* HERE.)
[Caste follows.]
Immediately after which
A LOVER'S CONFESSION, in the shape of a SONG,
by M. EMILE
(From the Theatre de la Poste St. Martin, at Paris.)
To conclude with a *Pathetic Drama*, in
One Act, called
The Sorrows of Werther.
(N.B. This Piece was damned at Covent Garden Theatre.)
[Caste follows.]
Brothers and Sisters of Charlotte, by six Cherubims
got for the occasion.
Orchestra.
Leader of the Band, Mr. Knight. Conductor, Mr. E. Knight. Piano Forte, Mr. Knight, Jun. Harpsichord, Master Knight (that was). Clavecin, by the Father of the Knights, to come.
Vivat Rex! No Money returned (because none will be taken).
On account of the above surprising Novelty, not an ORDER *can possibly be admitted :—*
But it is requested, that if such a thing finds its way into the front of the house, IT WILL BE KEPT.
Doors open at Half past Six, begin at Half past Seven precisely.
The Entrance for all parts of the House at the Private Box Door in Exeter Street.
Lowndes, Printer, Marquis Court, Drury Lane, London.

Mr. Dobell wonders if Lamb had any knowledge of this performance, and he suggests that possibly he had a hand in the bill. Certainly the interpolations concerning damnation are in his manner. The following notice was circulated in the theatre on the night of the performance :—

"The Ladies and Gentlemen who have honoured the Theatre with a Visit, are most respectfully informed that MRS. EDWIN has been very suddenly and seriously indisposed. In this emergency MRS. J. WEIPPART (formerly MISS J. STEVENSON), of this Theatre, has kindly undertaken the part of *Melesinda* in the Farce called Mr. H. . . . The prologue, intended to have been recited by MRS. EDWIN, will be read by Mr. H. . . himself—who solicits the customary indulgence.

"As a conclusion to this complicated Apology, it is with sorrow announced that M. PERLET, M. EMILE, and Mr. C. J. Mathews, have had the misfortune of falling from *their* horse and sprained *their* right ancle—but it is anxiously hoped—that as the actors intend *to put their best leg forward*, the performance will not be considered a *lame* one."

The last paragraph, it is suggested, embodies a sarcastic hit at some recent public example of bad grammar.

A NEW POEM

In *The Mirror* for June 1, 1833, are the following lines, collected under the general heading "The Gatherer":—

Where the soul drinks of misery's power,
Each moment seems a lengthened hour;
But when bright joy illumes the mind,
Time passes as the fleetest wind.—
How to a wicked soul must be
Whole ages of eternity?

C. L——B.

The poem is indexed "Lamb, C., lines by." See also new verses on pp. 965, 974.

SAPPHICS

On page 332 of Vol. V. I have printed an exercise in Sapphics which may very possibly be by Mary Lamb. The same number of *The Champion* (November 5, 1820) contains another poem in the same measure signed C., which not improbably was Lamb's contribution to the pastime. It runs as follows:—

DANAE EXPOSED WITH HER INFANT

An English Sapphic

Dim were the stars, and clouded was the azure,
Silence in darkness brooded on the ocean,
Save when the wave upon the pebbled sea-beach
Faintly resounded.

Then, O forsaken daughter of Acrisius!
Seiz'd in the hour of woe and tribulation,
Thou, with the guiltless victim of thy love, didst
Rock on the surges.

Sad o'er the silent bosom of the billow,
Borne on the breeze and modulated sweetly,
Plaintive as music, rose the mother's tones of
Comfortless anguish.

"Sad is thy birth, and stormy is thy cradle,
"Offspring of sorrow! nursling of the ocean!
"Waves rise around to pillow thee, and night winds
Lull thee to slumber!"

A Poem Possibly by Lamb

The late Mr. Dykes Campbell thought it very likely that the following charming verses were Lamb's. I think they may be, although it is odd that he should not have reprinted anything so pretty. Here and there it seems impossible that the poem could come from any other hand: line 11 for example, and the idea in lines 13 to 16, and the statement in lines 27 and 28. The lines are in *The Tickler Magazine* for 1821.

On Seeing Mrs. K—— B——, Aged Upwards of Eighty, Nurse an Infant

A sight like this might find apology
In worlds unsway'd by our Chronology;
As Tully says, (the thought's in Plato)—
"To die is but to go to Cato."
Of this world Time is of the essence,—
A kind of universal presence;
And therefore poets should have made him
Not only old, as they've pourtray'd him,
But young, mature, and old—all three
In one—a sort of mystery—
('Tis hard to paint abstraction pure.)
Here young—there old—and now mature—
Just as we see some old book-print,
Not to one scene its hero stint;
But, in the distance, take occasion
To draw him in some other station.
Here this prepost'rous union seems
A kind of meeting of extremes.
Ye may not live together. Mean ye
To pass that gulf that lies between ye
Of fourscore years, as we skip ages
In turning o'er historic pages?
Thou dost not to this age belong:
Thou art three generations wrong:
Old Time has miss'd thee: there he tarries!
Go on to thy contemporaries!
Give the child up. To see thee kiss him
Is a compleat anachronism.
Nay, keep him. It is good to see
Race link'd to race, in him and thee.
The child repelleth not at all
Her touch as uncongenial,
But loves the old Nurse like another—
Its sister—or its natural mother;
And to the nurse a pride it gives
To think (though old) that still she lives
With one, who may not hope in vain
To live her years all o'er again!

LIST OF LETTERS

ALPHABETICALLY ARRANGED

Ainsworth, W. Harrison, to	May 7, 1822	565
—— ——	Dec. 9, 1823	630
—— ——	Dec. 29, —	632
Aitken, J., to	July 5, 1825	974
Allsop, Thomas, to	July 13, 1820	973
—— ——	? 1821	548
—— ——	? —	548
—— ——	March 30, —	551
—— ——	July, 1823	618
—— ——	Sept. 6, —	620
—— ——	Sept. 9, —	620
—— ——	Sept. 10 —	621
—— ——	Sept., —	621
—— ——	? Oct., —	624
—— ——	Jan. 17, 1825	694
—— ——	Sept. 9, —	694
—— ——	Sept. 24, —	696
—— ——	Dec. 5, —	692
—— ——	? Middle Dec., 1827	764
—— ——	Dec. 20, —	765
—— ——	Jan. 9, 1828	767
—— ——	May 1, —	774
—— ——	Jan. 28, 1829	798
—— ——	July 2, 1832	812
—— ——	Late July, 1829	815
—— Mrs. Thomas, to	April 13, 1824	641
Arnold, S. J., to (from Charles and Mary Lamb)	? 1819	973
Asbury, James Vale, to	? April, 1830	843
—— ——	No date.	844
Ayrton, William, to	May 12, 1817	497
—— ——	Oct. 27, 1821	560
—— ——	March 14, 1830	837
—— Mrs. William, to	Jan. 23, 1821	549
—— ——	March 15, —	550
—— —— (from Mary Lamb)	? —	559
—— ——	April 16, 1833	907
Barton, Bernard, to	Sept. 11, 1822	571
—— ——	Oct. 9, —	576
—— ——	Dec. 23, —	588
—— ——	Jan. 9, 1823	594
—— ——	Feb. 17, —	598
—— ——	March 11, —	602
—— ——	April 5, —	604

Barton, Bernard, to	May 3, 1823	612
—— ——	July 10, —	616
—— ——	Sept. 2, —	618
—— ——	Sept. 17, —	621
—— ——	Nov. 22, —	629
—— ——	Jan. 9, 1824	633
—— ——	Jan. 23, —	634
—— ——	Feb. 25, —	637
—— ——	March 24, —	638
—— ——	Early Spring, —	639
—— ——	May 15, —	642
—— ——	July 7, —	644
—— ——	Aug. 17, —	652
—— ——	Sept. 30, —	654
—— ——	Dec. 1, —	662
—— ——	Feb. 10, 1825	669
—— ——	March 23, —	672
—— ——	April 6, —	676
—— ——	July 2, —	688
—— ——	Aug. 10, —	689
—— ——	Feb. 7, 1826	698
—— ——	March 20, —	700
—— ——	May 16, —	704
—— ——	Sept. 26, —	716
—— ——	No date. —	719
—— ——	No date. 1827	726
—— ——	June 11, —	730
—— ——	Aug. 10, —	745
—— ——	Aug. 28, —	746
—— ——	Late —	761
—— ——	Dec. 4, —	762
—— ——	End of —	766
—— ——	April 21, 1828	773
—— ——	Oct. 11, —	779
—— ——	Dec. 5, —	787
—— ——	March 25, 1829	805
—— ——	June 3, —	811
—— ——	July 25, —	813
—— ——	Dec. 8, —	824
—— ——	Feb. 25, 1830	831
—— ——	June 28, —	857
—— ——	Aug. 30, —	858
—— ——	April 30, 1831	871
—— Lucy, to (P.S. to letter to B. B.)	Dec. 1, 1824	662
Betham, Barbara, to (from Mary Lamb)	Nov. 2, 1814	446
—— Mary, to	Jan. 24, 1834	927
—— Matilda, to	? 1811	428
—— ——	? Late Summer, 1815	476
—— ——	Undated. —	478
—— ——	June 1, 1816	489
—— ——	June, 1833	913
Cary, Rev. H. F., to	Oct. 14, 1823	624
—— ——	April 3, 1826	703
—— ——	May 6, 1831	873
—— ——	Sept. 9, 1833	917
—— —— (from Charles and Mary Lamb)	Sept. 12, 1834	938
—— ——	Oct., —	938

Cary, Rev. H. F., to	Oct. 18, 1834	940
Chambers, Charles, to	? May, 1825	680
Childs, Mr., to	? Dec., 1834	941
Clare, John, to	Aug. 31, 1822	569
Clarke, Charles Cowden, to	Summer, 1821	558
—— ——	Feb. 25, 1828	769
—— ——	Oct., —	781
—— ——	Dec., —	791
—— ——	Feb. 2, 1829	802
—— ——	End of June, 1834	932
Clarkson, Thomas and Catherine, to	June, 1807	373
—— Mrs. Thomas, to (from Mary and Charles Lamb)	Dec. 10, 1808	393
Colburn (?), Henry, to,	June 14, (?1825)	684
—— ——	Sept. 25, 1827	755
Coleridge, S. T., to	May 27, 1796	1
—— ——	End of May, —	5
—— ——	June 10, —	13
—— ——	June 13, —	26
—— ——	July 1, —	32
—— ——	July 5, —	35
—— ——	July 6, —	36
—— ——	Sept. 27, —	41
—— ——	Oct. 3, —	43
—— ——	Oct. 17, —	48
—— ——	Oct. 24, —	49
—— ——	Oct. 28, —	51
—— ——	Nov. 8, —	54
—— ——	Nov. 14, —	57
—— ——	Dec. 2, —	60
—— ——	Dec. 5, —	64
—— ——	Dec. 9, —	67
—— ——	Dec. 10, —	72
—— ——	Jan. 2, 1797	75
—— ——	Jan. 10, —	80
—— ——	Jan. 18, —	87
—— ——	Feb. 5, —	89
—— ——	Feb. 13, —	95
—— ——	April 7, —	99
—— ——	April 15, —	101
—— ——	June 13, —	103
—— ——	June 24, —	106
—— ——	? June 29, —	107
—— ——	Late July —	108
—— ——	Aug. 24, —	110
—— ——	About Sept. 20, —	111
—— ——	Jan. 28, 1798	114
—— ——	Early Summer, —	117
—— ——	? Jan. 23, 1800	154
—— ——	? April 16 or 17, —	161
—— ——	? Spring, —	165
—— ——	May 12, —	166
—— ——	? Late July, —	170
—— ——	Aug. 6, —	171
—— ——	Aug. 14, —	177

Coleridge, S. T., to.	Aug. 26, 1800	183
—— ——	Sept. 8, 1802	242
—— ——	Oct. 9, —	246
—— ——	Oct. 11, —	250
—— ——	Oct. 23, —	252
—— ——	Nov. 4, —	255
—— ——	April 13, 1803	268
—— ——	May, —	270
—— ——	May 27, —	272
—— ——	March 10, 1804	284
—— ——	April 4, —	287
—— —— (from Mary Lamb)	No date.	361
—— ——	June 7, 1809	400
—— ——	Oct. 30, —	403
—— ——	Aug. 13, 1814	438
—— ——	Aug. 26, —	440
—— ——	Dec. 24, 1818	517
—— ——	? Summer, 1819	530
—— ——	Jan. 10, 1820	536
—— ——	? Autumn, —	544
—— ——	May 1, 1821	551
—— ——	March 9, 1822	561
—— ——	? June, 1825	683
—— ——	July 2, —	684
—— ——	March 22, 1826	702
—— ——	June 1, —	706
—— ——	April 14, 1832	885
—— Mrs. S. T., to (from Mary Lamb)	Oct. 13, 1804	297
Collier, John Dyer, to	Late 1812	432
—— Mr. and Mrs. J. D., to	Jan. 6, 1823	592
—— Mrs. J. D., to (from Mary Lamb)	No date.	433
—— ——	Nov. 2, 1824	655
—— John Payne, to	Dec. 10, 1817	508
—— ——	May 16, 1821	553
Cottle, Joseph, to	Nov. 5, 1819	531
—— ——	? Late —	532
—— ——	? May 26, 1820	540
Dibdin, John Bates, to	? 1823	610
—— ——	May 6, —	613
—— ——	Oct. 28, —	625
—— ——	July 28, 1824	647
—— ——	Jan. 11, 1825	665
—— ——	June 30, 1826	707
—— ——	July 14, —	710
—— ——	Sept. 9, —	715
—— ——	Sept. 5, 1827	750
—— ——	Sept. 13, —	751
—— ——	Sept. 18, —	751
—— ——	Oct. 2, —	757
Dilke, Charles Wentworth, to	March 5, 1832	884
—— ——	Feb., 1833	900
—— ——	April, —	906
—— ——	? Dec. 21, —	923
—— ——	Undated. ? 1834	926
—— ——	— —	926
—— ——	Spring, —	926
—— ——	End of July —	936
Dyer, George, to	Dec. 5, 1808	970
—— ——	? Jan., 1829	793

Dyer, George, to	Dec. 20, 1830	863
—— ——	Feb. 22, 1831	868
—— Mrs. George, to	Dec. 22, 1834	942
Elton, C. A., to	Aug. 17, 1824 (?)	650
Field, Barron, to	Aug. 31, 1817	500
—— ——	Aug. 16, 1820	542
—— ——	Sept. 22, 1822	573
—— ——	Oct. 4, 1827	757
Forster, John, to	? Late April, 1832	886
—— ——	Dec. 23, —	894
—— ——	Undated.	895
—— ——	—	896
—— ——	—	896
—— ——	? March, 1833	905
—— ——	May, —	910
—— ——	May 12, —	911
—— ——	June 25, 1834	932
Fryer, Miss, to	Feb. 14, —	928
—— ——	No date.	929
Gillman, James, to	May 2, 1821	552
—— ——	Oct. 26, 1829	816
—— ——	? Nov. 29, —	821
—— ——	Nov. 30, —	821
—— ——	March 8, 1830	836
—— ——	? Early Spring, —	843
—— ——	Aug. 5, 1834	937
—— Rev. James, to	May 7, 1833	909
Godwin, William, to	Dec. 4, 1800	196
—— ——	No date. Autumn, —	196
—— ——	Dec. 10, —	198
—— ——	Dec. 14, —	201
—— ——	June 29, 1801	219
—— ——	Sept. 9, —	225
—— ——	Sept. 17, —	228
—— ——	Nov. 8, 1803	281
—— ——	Nov. 10, —	281
—— ——	? 1806	371
—— ——	March 11, 1808	386
—— ——	? 1810	425
—— ——	May 16, 1822	566
—— Mrs., to	No date.	283
Gutch, John Mathew, to	No date. 1800	169
—— ——	April 9, 1810	413
Haydon, Benjamin Robert, to	Dec. 26, 1817	509
—— ——	Oct. 9, 1822	578
—— ——	Oct. 29, —	580
—— ——	March, 1827	724
—— ——	Aug., 1828	778
Hazlitt, William, to	Nov. 10, 1805	323
—— ——	Jan. 15, 1806	329
—— ——	Feb. 19, —	336
—— ——	March 15, —	346
—— ——	Aug. 9, 1810	416

Hazlitt, William, to	Nov. 28, 1810	424
—— ——	Oct. 2, 1811	431
—— Mrs. W. See Stoddart, Sarah.		
—— jr., William, to	Sept. 13, 1831	880
—— Rev. W., to	Feb. 18, 1808	380
Hill, Thomas, to	No date.	710
Holcroft, jr., Thomas, to	Autumn, 1819	531
Hone, William, to	April, 1824	641
—— ——	May 2, 1825	678
—— ——	Oct. 24, —	695
—— ——	April, 1827	725
—— ——	End of May,—	729
—— ——	June, —	729
—— ——	Early July, —	733
—— ——	? Oct., —	759
—— ——	Dec. 15, —	764
—— ——	May 21, 1830	853
—— ——	March 6, 1833	902
Hood, Thomas, to	Aug. 10, 1824	647
—— ——	May, 1827	726
—— ——	Sept. 18, —	750
—— ——	No date. ? —	760
—— ——	Late Autumn, 1828	785
—— ——	? May, 1829	809
—— ——	? May, —	810
Hoods, the Thomas, to (from Mary Lamb)	? Summer, 1828	776
Hume, Joseph, to	No date.	455
—— —— his daughters, to	No date. 1832	883
Humphreys, Miss, to	Jan. 27, 1821	549
Hunt, Leigh, to	April 18, —	551
—— ——	? Nov., 1824	659
—— ——	Dec., 1827	763
Hutchinson, Sarah, to (from Mary and Charles Lamb)	Aug. 20, 1815	472
—— ——	Oct. 19, —	479
—— —— (from Mary Lamb)	Middle of Nov., 1816	494
—— —— ——	? Late —	496
—— ——	April 25, 1823	608
—— ——(?)	Undated.	610
—— ——	Nov. 25, 1824	658
—— ——	Jan. 20, 1825	667
—— ——	March 1, —	671
—— ——	April 18, —	677
James, Miss Sarah, to	? April, 1829	806
Kelly, Fanny, to	July 20, 1819	527
—— ——	July 20, —	529
Kenney, James and Louisa, to	Oct., 1817	503
—— Mrs. James, to (from Mary Lamb)	? Early Dec., 1822	583
Knowles, James Sheridan, to	? April, 1832	886
Lamb, Mrs. John, to	May 22, 1822	568
—— Mary, to	August, —	569
Landor, Walter Savage, to	Oct., 1832	889
Lloyd, Charles, to	Autumn, 1823	623

Manning, Thomas, to	Dec., 1799	151
—— ——	Dec. 28, —	152
—— ——	Feb. 13, 1800	155
—— ——	March 1, —	157
—— ——	March 17, —	159
—— ——	April 5, —	160
—— ——	May 20, —	167
—— ——	? May 25, —	168
—— ——	Aug. 9, —	175
—— ——	Aug. 11, —	176
—— ——	Aug. 24, —	180
—— ——	Aug. 28, —	186
—— ——	Sept. 22, —	188
—— ——	Oct. 16, —	189
—— ——	Nov. 3, —	191
—— ——	Nov. 28, —	194
—— ——	Dec. 13, —	199
—— ——	Dec. 16, —	203
—— ——	Middle Dec., —	205
—— ——	Middle Dec., —	205
—— ——	Dec. 27, —	206
—— ——	Feb. 15, 1801	212
—— ——	Late Feb., —	215
—— ——	April, —	217
—— ——	Aug., —	220
—— ——	Aug. 31, —	223
—— ——	? Feb. 15, 1802	233
—— ——	? April, —	240
—— ——	Sept. 24, —	243
—— ——	Nov., —	256
—— ——	Feb. 19, 1803	258
—— ——	March, —	261
—— ——	Feb. 23, 1805	302
—— ——	July 27, —	313
—— ——	Nov. 15, —	328
—— ——	No date.	329
—— ——	May 10, 1806	348
—— ——	Dec. 5, —	364
—— ——	Feb. 26, 1808	381
—— ——	March 28, 1809	395
—— ——	Jan. 2, 1810	408
—— ——	Dec. 25, 1815	480
—— ——	Dec. 26, —	482
—— ——	May 28, 1819	522
—— ——	? Feb., 1825	671
Marter, W., to	July 19, 1824	646
Montagu, Basil, to	July 12, 1810	415
—— Mrs. Basil, to	Summer, 1827	740
Morgan, John, to	March 8, 1811	429
Moxon, Edward, to	? Sept., 1826	718
—— ——	July 17, 1827	734
—— ——	? Sept. 26, —	756
—— ——	Dec. 22, —	765
—— ——	? Jan., 1828	767
—— ——	Feb. 18, —	768
—— ——	March 19, —	772
—— ——	May 3, —	774
—— ——	Dec., —	786

Moxon, Edward, to	Sept. 22, 1829	815
—— ——	May 12, 1830	851
—— ——	Nov. 12, —	861
—— ——	? Dec., —	862
—— ——	? Dec. 25, —	864
—— ——	Feb. 3, 1831	866
—— ——	July 14, —	874
—— ——	Early August, —	877
—— ——	Aug. 5, —	878
—— ——	Sept. 5, —	879
—— ——	Oct. 24, —	880
—— ——	Dec. 15, —	882
—— ——(?)	June 1, —	887
—— ——	Late 1832	891
—— ——	Winter, —	891
—— ——	Dec., —	893
—— ——	Jan., 1833	894
—— ——	Jan. 3, —	895
—— ——	Jan. 24, —	896
—— ——	Feb. 10, —	897
—— ——	Feb., —	898
—— ——	No date. —	899
—— ——	Early —	900
—— ——	March 19, —	902
—— ——	? Spring, —	903
—— ——	March 30, —	904
—— ——	Spring, —	904
—— ——	? April 10, —	906
—— ——	April 25, —	908
—— ——	April 27, —	908
—— ——	July 14, —	914
—— ——	July 24, —	915
—— —— and Emma (from Mary and Charles Lamb)	? July 31, —	916
—— —— (from Mary and Charles Lamb)	Sept. 26, —	918
—— ——	Oct. 17, —	919
—— —— and Emma	Nov. 29, —	920
—— ——	Jan. 28, 1834	927
Norris, Jane, to (from Mary Lamb)	Dec. 25, 1841	943
—— —— ——	Oct. 3, 1842	944
—— —— (from Miss James)	July 25, 1843	944
—— Mrs Randal, to (from Mary Lamb)	June 18, 1823	614
Novello, Vincent, to	Jan. 25, 1825	668
—— ——	May 9, 1826	704
—— ——	Nov. 6, 1828	782
—— ——	? Nov. 10, 1829	818
—— ——	May 14, 1830	852
—— ——	May, —	852
—— ——	Nov. 8, —	861
—— Mrs. Vincent, to (from Mary Lamb)	Spring, 1820	538
Ollier, Charles, to	? Dec., 1825	696
—— ——	Early 1826	697
—— ——	Jan., —	698
—— ——	March 16, —	699
—— Charles and James, to	June 18, 1818	515
Patmore, P. G., to	July 19, 1827	735
—— ——	Sept., —	749

Payne, J. H., to	Autumn, 1822	575
—— ——	Oct. 22, —	578
—— ——	Nov. 13, —	581
—— ——	Jan., 1823	590
—— ——	Jan., 23, —	596
—— ——	Feb. [9], —	596
Poole, Thomas, to	Feb. 14, 1804	283
—— ——	May 4, —	287
—— ——	May 5, —	288
Procter, B. W., to	? Summer, 1821	555
—— ——	April 13, 1823	607
—— ——	Nov. 11, 1824	656
—— ——	Jan. 19, 1829	793
—— ——	Jan. 22, —	796
—— ——	? Jan. 29, —	798
—— ——	No date. —	800
—— ——	Feb. 2, —	801
—— ——	Undated. 1833	901
Rickman, John, to	? Nov., 1801	230
—— ——	April 10, 1802	239
—— ——	July 16, 1803	277
—— ——	Jan. 25, 1806	332
—— ——	March, —	345
—— ——	Oct. 3, 1828	975
Robinson, H. C., to	March 12, 1808	388
—— ——	May, 1809	398
—— ——	Feb. 7, 1810	411
—— ——	Nov. 20, 1824	657
—— ——	March 29, 1825	673
—— ——	Jan. 20, 1827	720
—— ——	Jan. 20, —	723
—— ——	Jan. 29, —	723
—— ——	Jan., —	724
—— ——	June 26, —	733
—— ——	Oct. 1, —	756
—— ——	Feb. 26, 1828	772
—— ——	Feb. 27, 1829	803
—— ——	? April, —	807
—— ——	April 17, —	808
—— ——	? Early Oct., 1832	888
—— Thomas, to	Nov. 11, 1822	581
Rogers, Samuel, to	March 22, 1829	804
—— ——	Oct. 5, 1830	860
—— ——	? Dec. 21, 1833	923
Russell, J. Fuller, to	Summer, 1834	932
—— ——	— —	934
Sargus, Mr., to	Feb. 23, 1815	454
Scott, John, to	? Feb., 1814	433
—— ——	Dec. 12, —	449
—— Sir Walter, to	Oct. 29, 1822	580
Shelley, Mrs. Percy Bysshe, to	July 26, 1827	738
Southey, Robert, to	July 28, 1798	121
—— ——	Oct. 18, —	124
—— ——	Oct. 29, —	125
—— ——	Nov. 3, —	128
—— ——	Nov. 8, —	129
—— ——	? Nov., —	132

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